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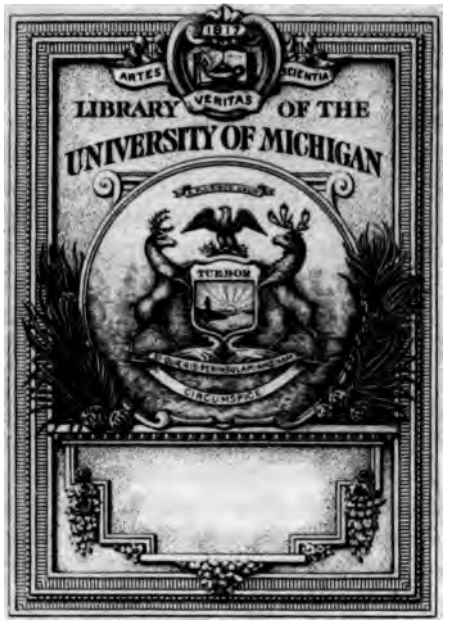
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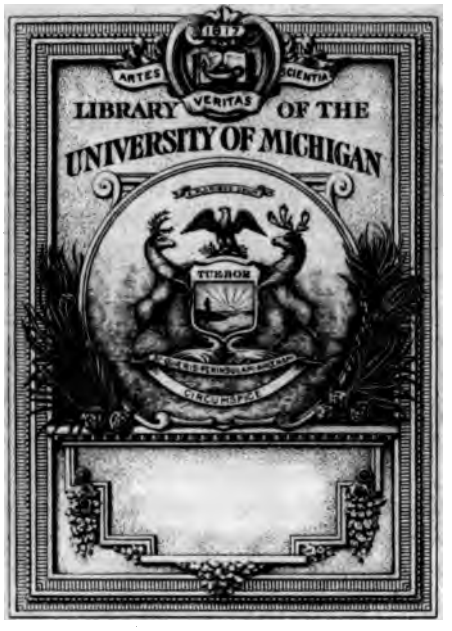
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HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

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HISTORY

OF

THE ENGLISH PEOPLE

BY

JOHN RICHARD GREEN, M.A.

VOLUME III.

PURITAN ENGLAND 1603-1660

THE REVOLUTION 1660-1688



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[1] *By permission of Mr. Markham.*

BOOK VII.

PURITAN ENGLAND.

1603—1660.

AUTHORITIES FOR BOOK VII.

1603—1660.

For the reign of James the First we have Camden's "Annals" of that king, Goodman's "Court of King James I.," Weldon's "Secret History of the Court of James I.," Roger Coke's "Detection," the correspondence in the "Cabala," the letters published under the title of "The Court and Times of James I.," the documents in Winwood's "Memorials of State," and the reported proceedings of the last two Parliaments. The Camden Society has published the correspondence of James with Cecil, and Walter Yonge's "Diary." The letters and works of Bacon, now fully edited by Mr. Spedding, are necessary for any true understanding of the period. Hacket's "Life of Williams" and Harrington's "Nugæ Antiquæ" throw valuable side-light on the politics of the time. But the Stuart system, both at home and abroad, can only fairly be read by the light of the state-papers of this and the following reign, calendars of which are now being published by the Master of the Rolls. It is his employment of these as well as his own fairness and good sense which gives value to the series of works which Mr. Gardiner has devoted to this period; his "History of England from the Accession of James the First," his "History of the Spanish Marriages," "England under the Duke of Buckingham," and "The Personal Government of Charles the First." The series has as yet been carried to 1637. To Mr. Gardiner also we owe the publication, through the Camden Society, of reports of some of the earlier Stuart Parliaments. Ranke's "History of England during the Seventeenth Century" has the same documentary value as embodying the substance of state-papers in both English and foreign archives, which throw great light on the foreign politics of the Stuart kings. It covers the whole period of Stuart rule. With the reign of Charles the First our historical materials increase. For Laud we have his remarkable "Diary;" for Strafford the "Strafford Letters." Hallam has justly characterized Clarendon's "History of the Rebellion" as belonging "rather to the class of memoirs" than of histories; and the rigorous analysis of it by Ranke shows the very different value of its various parts. Though the work will always retain a literary interest from its nobleness of style and the grand series of character-portraits which it embodies, the worth of its

account of all that preceded the war is almost destroyed by the contrast between its author's conduct at the time and his later description of the Parliament's proceedings, as well as by the deliberate and malignant falsehood with which he has perverted the whole action of his parliamentary opponents. With the outbreak of the war he becomes of greater value, and he gives a good account of the Cornish rising; but from the close of the first struggle his work becomes tedious and unimportant. May's "History of the Long Parliament" is fairly accurate and impartial; but the basis of any real account of it must be found in its own proceedings as they have been preserved in the notes of Sir Ralph Verney and Sir Simonds D'Ewes. The last remain unpublished; but Mr. Forster has drawn much from them in his two works, "The Grand Remonstrance" and "The Arrest of the Five Members." The collections of state-papers by Rushworth and Nalson are indispensable for this period. It is illustrated by a series of memoirs, of very different degrees of value, such as those of Whitelock, Ludlow, Sir Philip Warwick, Holles, and Major Hutchinson, as well as by works like Mrs. Hutchinson's memoir of her husband, Baxter's "Autobiography," or Sir Thomas Herbert's memoirs of Charles during his last two years. The Diary of Nehemiah Wallington gives us the common life of puritanism during this troubled time. For Cromwell the primary authority is Mr. Carlyle's "Life and Letters of Cromwell," an invaluable store of documents, edited with the care of an antiquarian and the genius of a poet. Fairfax may be studied in the "Fairfax Correspondence," and in the documents embodied in Mr. Clements Markham's life of him. Sprigge's "Anglia Rediviva" gives an account of the New Model and its doings. Thurlow's State Papers furnish an immense mass of documents for the period of the Protectorate; and Burton's "Diary" gives an account of the proceedings in the Protector's second Parliament. For Irish affairs we have a vast store of materials in the Ormond papers and letters collected by Carte; for Scotland we have "Baillie's Letters," Burnet's "Lives of the Hamiltons," and Sir James Turner's "Memoir of the Scotch Invasion." Among the general accounts of this reign we may name Disraeli's "Commentaries of the Reign of Charles I." as prominent on one side, Brodie's "History of the British Empire" and Godwin's "History of the Commonwealth" on the other. Guizot in his three works on "Charles I. and the Revolution," "Cromwell and the Protectorate," and "Richard Cromwell and the Restoration," is accurate and impartial; and the documents he has added are valuable for the foreign history of the time. A good deal of information may be found in Forster's "Lives of the Statesmen of the Commonwealth," and Sandford's "Illustrations of the Great Rebellion."

CHAPTER I.

ENGLAND AND PURITANISM.

1603—1660.

England at the death of Elizabeth.

THE death of Elizabeth is one of the turning-points of English history. The age of the Renascence and of the New Monarchy passed away with the Queen. The whole face of the realm had been silently changing during the later years of her reign. The dangers which had hitherto threatened our national existence and our national unity had alike disappeared. The kingdom which had been saved from ruin but fifty years before by the jealousies of its neighbours now stood in the fore-front of European powers. France clung to its friendship. Spain trembled beneath its blows. The Papacy had sullenly withdrawn from a fruitless strife with the heretic island. The last of the Queen's labours had laid Ireland at her feet, and her death knit Scotland to its ancient enemy by the tie of a common king. Within England itself the change was as great. Religious severance, the most terrible of national dangers, had been averted by the patience and the ruthlessness of the Crown. The Catholics were weak and held pitilessly down. The Protestant sectaries were hunted as pitilessly from the realm. The ecclesiastical compromise of the Tudors had at last won the adhesion of the country at large. Nor was the social change less remarkable. The natural growth of wealth and a patient good government had gradually put an end to all social anarchy. The dread of feudal revolt

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England and Puritanism.

had passed for ever away. The fall of the Northern Earls, of Norfolk, and of Essex, had broken the last strength of the older houses. The baronage had finally made way for a modern nobility, but this nobility, sprung as it was from the court of the Tudors, and dependent for its existence on the favour of the Crown, had none of that traditional hold on the people at large which made the feudal lords so formidable a danger to public order.

Growth of social wealth.

If the older claims of freedom had been waived in presence of the dangers which so long beset even national existence, the disappearance of these dangers brought naturally with it a revival of the craving for liberty and self-government. And once awakened such a craving found a solid backing in the material progress of the time, in the up-growth of new social classes, in the intellectual developement of the people, and in the new boldness and vigour of the national temper. The long outer peace, the tranquillity of the realm, the lightness of taxation till the outbreak of war with Spain, had spread prosperity throughout the land. Even the war failed to hinder the enrichment of the trading classes. The Netherlands were the centre of European trade, and of all European countries England had for more than half-a-century been making the greatest advance in its trade with the Netherlands. As early as in the eight years which preceded Elizabeth's accession and the eight years that followed it, while the trade of Spain with the Low Countries had doubled, and that of France and Germany with them had grown three-fold, the trade between England and Antwerp had increased twenty-fold. The increase remained at least as great through the forty years that followed, and the erection of stately houses, marriages with noble families, and the purchase of great estates, showed the rapid growth of the merchant class in wealth and social importance. London above all was profiting by the general advance. The rapidity of its growth awoke the jealousy of the royal Council. One London merchant, Thomas Sutton, founded the great

hospital and school of the Charter House. Another, Hugh Myddelton, brought the New River from its springs at Chadwell and Amwell to supply London with pure water. Ere many years had gone the wealth of the great capital was to tell on the whole course of English history. Nor was the merchant class alone in this elevation. If the greater nobles no longer swayed the State, the spoil of the Church lands, and the general growth of national wealth, were raising the lesser landowners into a new social power. An influence which was to play a growing part in our history, the influence of the gentry, of the squires—as they were soon to be called—told more and more on English politics. In all but name indeed the leaders of this class were the equals of the peers whom they superseded. Men like the Wentworths in the north, or the Hampdens in the south, boasted as long a rent-roll and wielded as great an influence as many of the older nobles. The attitude of the Lower House towards the Higher throughout the Stewart Parliaments sprang mainly from the consciousness of the Commons that in wealth as well as in political consequence the merchants and country gentlemen who formed the bulk of their members stood far above the mass of the peers.

Growth of national spirit.

While a new social fabric was thus growing up on the wreck of feudal England, new influences were telling on its developement. The immense advance of the people as a whole in knowledge and intelligence throughout the reign of Elizabeth was in itself a revolution. The hold of tradition, the unquestioning awe which formed the main strength of the Tudor throne, had been sapped and weakened by the intellectual activity of the Renascence, by its endless questionings, its historic research, its philosophic scepticism. Writers and statesmen were alike discussing the claims of government and the wisest and most lasting forms of rule, travellers turned aside from the frescoes of Giorgione to study the aristocratic polity of Venice, and Jesuits borrowed from the schoolmen of the

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middle ages a doctrine of popular rights which still forms the theory of modern democracy. On the other hand the nation was learning to rely on itself, to believe in its own strength and vigour, to crave for a share in the guidance of its own life. His conflict with the two great spiritual and temporal powers of Christendom, his strife at once with the Papacy and the House of Austria, had roused in every Englishman a sense of supreme manhood, which told, however slowly, on his attitude towards the Crown. The seaman whose tiny bark had dared the storms of far-off seas, the young squire who crossed the Channel to flesh his maiden sword at Ivry or Ostend, brought back with them to English soil the daring temper, the sense of inexhaustible resources, which had borne them on through storm and battle-field. The nation which gave itself to the rule of the Stewarts was another nation from the panic-struck people that gave itself in the crash of social and religious order to the guidance of the Tudors. It was plain that a new age of our history must open when the lofty patriotism, the dauntless energy, the overpowering sense of effort and triumph, which rose into their full grandeur through the war with Spain, turned from the strife with Philip to seek a new sphere of activity at home.

The spirit of religion.

What had hindered this force from telling as yet fully on national affairs was the breadth and largeness which characterized the temper of the Renascence. Through the past half-century the aims of Englishmen had been drawn far over the narrow bounds of England itself to every land and every sea; while their mental activity spent itself as freely on poetry and science as on religion and politics. But at the moment which we have reached the whole of this energy was seized upon and concentrated by a single force. For a hundred years past men had been living in the midst of a spiritual revolution. Not only the world about them but the world of thought and feeling within every breast had been utterly transformed. The work of

the sixteenth century had wrecked that tradition of religion, of knowledge, of political and social order, which had been accepted without question by the Middle Ages. The sudden freedom of the mind from these older bonds brought a consciousness of power such as had never been felt before; and the restless energy, the universal activity of the Renascence were but outer expressions of the pride, the joy, the amazing self-confidence, with which man welcomed this revelation of the energies which had lain slumbering within him. But his pride and self-reliance were soon dashed by a feeling of dread. With the deepening sense of human individuality came a deepening conviction of the boundless capacities of the human soul. Not as a theological dogma, but as a human fact man knew himself to be an all but infinite power, whether for good or for ill. The drama towered into sublimity as it painted the strife of mighty forces within the breasts of Othello or Macbeth. Poets passed into metaphysicians as they strove to unravel the workings of conscience within the soul. From that hour one dominant influence told on human action: and all the various energies that had been called into life by the age that was passing away were seized, concentrated, and steadied to a definite aim by the spirit of religion.

The Bible.

The whole temper of the nation felt the change. "Theology rules there," said Grotius of England only two years after Elizabeth's death; and when Casaubon was invited by her successor to his court he found both king and people indifferent to pure letters. "There is a great abundance of theologians in England;" he says, "all point their studies in that direction." Even a country gentleman, like Colonel Hutchinson, felt the theological impulse. "As soon as he had improved his natural understanding with the acquisition of learning, the first studies he exercized himself in were the principles of religion." It was natural that literature should reflect the tendency of the time; and the dumpy little quartos of controversy and

CHAP. I. England and Puritanism.

piety which still crowd our older libraries drove before them the classical translations and Italian novelettes of the age of the Renascence. But their influence was small beside that of the Bible. The popularity of the Bible had been growing fast from the day when Bishop Bonner set up the first six copies in St. Paul's. Even then, we are told, "many well-disposed people used much to resort to the hearing thereof, especially when they could get any that had an audible voice to read to them." . . . "One John Porter used sometimes to be occupied in that goodly exercise, to the edifying of himself as well as others. This Porter was a fresh young man and of a big stature; and great multitudes would resort thither to hear him, because he could read well and had an audible voice." But the "goodly exercise" of readers such as Porter was soon superseded by the continued recitation of both Old Testament and New in the public services of the Church; while the small Geneva Bibles carried the Scripture into every home, and wove it into the life of every English family.

Its literary influence.

Religion indeed was only one of the causes for this sudden popularity of the Bible. The book was equally important in its bearing on the intellectual developement of the people. All the prose literature of England, save the forgotten tracts of Wyclif, has grown up since the translation of the Scriptures by Tyndall and Coverdale. So far as the nation at large was concerned, no history, no romance, hardly any poetry save the little-known verse of Chaucer, existed in the English tongue when the Bible was ordered to be set up in churches. Sunday after Sunday, day after day, the crowds that gathered round the Bible in the nave of St. Paul's, or the family group that hung on its words in the devotional exercises at home, were leavened with a new literature. Legend and annal, war song and psalm, State-roll and biography, the mighty voices of prophets, the parables of Evangelists, stories of mission journeys, of perils by the sea and among the heathen, philosophic arguments, apocalyptic visions, all were

flung broadcast over minds unoccupied for the most part by any rival learning. The disclosure of the stores of Greek literature had wrought the revolution of the Renascence. The disclosure of the older mass of Hebrew literature wrought the revolution of the Reformation. But the one revolution was far deeper and wider in its effects than the other. No version could transfer to another tongue the peculiar charm of language which gave their value to the authors of Greece and Rome. Classical letters therefore remained in the possession of the learned, that is, of the few; and among these, with the exception of Colet and More, or of the pedants who revived a Pagan worship in the gardens of the Florentine Academy, their direct influence was purely intellectual. But the language of the Hebrew, the idiom of the Hellenistic Greek, lent themselves with a curious felicity to the purposes of translation. As a mere literary monument the English version of the Bible remains the noblest example of the English tongue, while its perpetual use made it from the instant of its appearance the standard of our language.

Its social influence.

For the moment however its literary effect was less than its social. The power of the book over the mass of Englishmen showed itself in a thousand superficial ways, and in none more conspicuously than in the influence it exerted on ordinary speech. It formed, we must repeat, the whole literature which was practically accessible to ordinary Englishmen; and when we recall the number of common phrases which we owe to great authors, the bits of Shakspere, or Milton, or Dickens, or Thackeray, which unconsciously interweave themselves in our ordinary talk, we shall better understand the strange mosaic of Biblical words and phrases which coloured English talk two hundred years ago. The mass of picturesque allusion and illustration which we borrow from a thousand books, our fathers were forced to borrow from one; and the borrowing was the easier and the more natural that the range of the Hebrew literature fitted it

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for the expression of every phase of feeling. When Spenser poured forth his warmest love-notes in the "Epithalamion," he adopted the very words of the Psalmist, as he bade the gates open for the entrance of his bride. When Cromwell saw the mists break over the hills of Dunbar, he hailed the sun burst with the cry of David: "Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered. Like as the smoke vanisheth, so shalt thou drive them away!" Even to common minds this familiarity with grand poetic imagery in prophet and apocalypse gave a loftiness and ardour of expression that with all its tendency to exaggeration and bombast we may prefer to the slip-shod vulgarisms of to-day.

Its religious influence.

But far greater than its effect on literature or social phrase was the effect of the Bible on the character of the people at large. The Bible was as yet the one book which was familiar to every Englishman; and everywhere its words, as they fell on ears which custom had not deadened to their force and beauty, kindled a startling enthusiasm. The whole moral effect which is produced now-a-days by the religious newspaper, the tract, the essay, the missionary report, the sermon, was then produced by the Bible alone; and its effect in this way, however dispassionately we examine it, was simply amazing. The whole nation became a church. The problems of life and death, whose questionings found no answer in the higher minds of Shakspere's day, pressed for an answer not only from noble and scholar but from farmer and shopkeeper in the age that followed him. The answer they found was almost of necessity a Calvinistic answer. Unlike as the spirit of Calvinism seemed to the spirit of the Renascence, both found a point of union in their exaltation of the individual man. The mighty strife of good and evil within the soul itself which had overawed the imagination of dramatist and poet became the one spiritual conception in the mind of the Puritan. The Calvinist looked on churches and communions as convenient groupings of pious Christians; it might be as even

indispensable parts of a Christian order. But religion in its deepest and innermost sense had to do not with churches but with the individual soul. It was each Christian man who held in his power the issues of life and death. It was in each Christian conscience that the strife was waged between Heaven and Hell. Not as one of a body, but as a single soul, could each Christian claim his part in the mystery of redemption. In the outer world of worship and discipline the Calvinist might call himself one of many brethren, but at every moment of his inner existence, in the hour of temptation and of struggle, in his dark and troubled wrestling with sin, in the glory of conversion, in the peace of acceptance with God, he stood utterly alone. With such a conception of human life Puritanism offered the natural form for English religion at a time when the feeling with which religion could most easily ally itself was the sense of individuality. The 'prentice who sate awed in the pit of the theatre as the storm in the mind of Lear outdid the storm among the elements passed easily into the Calvinist who saw himself day by day the theatre of a yet mightier struggle between the powers of light and the powers of darkness, and his soul the prize of an eternal conflict between Heaven and Hell.

Growth of Calvinism.

It was thus by its own natural developement that the temper of Englishmen became above all religious, and that their religion took in most cases the form of Calvinism. But the rapid spread of Calvinism was aided by outer causes as well as inner ones. The reign of Elizabeth had been a long struggle for national existence. When Shakspere first trod the streets of London it was a question whether England should still remain England or whether it should sink into a vassal of Spain. In that long contest the creed which Henry and Elizabeth had constructed, the strange compromise of old tradition with new convictions which the country was gradually shaping into a new religion for itself, had done much for England's victory.

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England and Puritanism.

It had held England together as a people. It had hindered any irreparable severance of the nation into warring churches. But it had done this unobserved. To the bulk of men the victory seemed wholly due to the energy and devotion of Calvinism. Rome had placed herself in the forefront of England's enemies, and it was the Calvinistic Puritan who was the irreconcileable foe of Rome. It was the Puritan who went forth to fight the Spaniard in France or in the Netherlands. It was the Puritan who broke into the Spanish Main, and who singed Philip's beard at Cadiz. It was the Puritan whose assiduous preachings and catechizings had slowly won the mass of the English people to any real acceptance of Protestantism. And as the war drifted on, as the hatred of Spain and resentment at the Papacy grew keener and fiercer, as patriotism became more identified with Protestantism, and Protestantism more identified with hatred of Rome, the side of English religion which lay furthest from all contact with the tradition of the past grew more and more popular among Englishmen.

Puritanism and the people.

To Elizabeth, whether on religious or political grounds, Calvinism was the most hateful of her foes. But it was in vain that she strove by a rigorous discipline to check its advance. Her discipline could only tell on the clergy, and the movement was far more a lay than a clerical one. Whether she would or no, in fact, the Queen's policy favoured the Puritan cause. It was impossible to befriend Calvinism abroad without furthering Calvinism at home. The soldiers and adventurers who flocked from England to fight in the Huguenot camps came back steeped in the Huguenot theology. The exiles who fled to England from France and from the Netherlands spread their narrower type of religion through the towns where they found a refuge. As the strife with Rome grew hotter the government was forced to fill parliament and the magistracy with men whose zealous Protestantism secured their fidelity in the case of a Catholic rising. But a zealous

Protestant was almost inevitably a Calvinist; and to place the administration of the country in Calvinist hands was to give an impulse to Puritanism. How utterly Elizabeth failed was seen at the beginning of her successor's reign. The bulk of the country gentlemen, the bulk of the wealthier traders, had by that time become Puritans. In the first Parliament of James the House of Commons refused for the first time to transact business on a Sunday. His second Parliament chose to receive the communion at St. Margaret's Church instead of Westminster Abbey "for fear of copes and wafer-cakes."

Puritanism in the Church.

The same difficulty met Elizabeth in her efforts to check the growth of Puritanism in the Church itself. At the very outset of her reign the need of replacing the Marian bishops by staunch Protestants forced her to fill the English sees with men whose creed was in almost every case Calvinistic. The bulk of the lower clergy indeed were left without change; but as the older parsons died out their places were mostly filled by Puritan successors. The Universities furnished the new clergy, and at the close of Elizabeth's reign the tone of the Universities was hotly Puritan. Even the outer uniformity on which the Queen set her heart took a Puritan form. The use of the Prayer-book indeed was enforced; but the aspect of English churches and of English worship tended more and more to the model of Geneva. The need of more light to follow the service in the new Prayer-books served as a pretext for the removal of stained glass from the church windows. The Communion table stood almost everywhere in the midst of the church. If the surplice was generally worn during the service, the preacher often mounted the pulpit in a Geneva gown. We see the progress of this change in the very chapel of the Primates themselves. The chapel of Lambeth House was one of the most conspicuous among the ecclesiastical buildings of the time; it was a place "whither many of the nobility, judges, clergy, and persons of all sorts, as well strangers as natives, resorted."

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But all pomp of worship gradually passed away from it. Under Cranmer the stained glass was dashed from its windows. In Elizabeth's time the communion table was moved into the middle of the chapel, and the credence table destroyed. Under James Archbishop Abbott put the finishing stroke on all attempts at a high ceremonial. The cope was no longer used as a special vestment in the communion. The Primate and his chaplains forbore to bow at the name of Christ. The organ and choir were alike abolished, and the service reduced to a simplicity which would have satisfied Calvin.

Puritanism and politics.

Foiled as it was, the effort of Elizabeth to check the spread of Puritanism was no mere freak of religious bigotry. It sprang from a clear realization of the impossibility of harmonizing the new temper of the nation with the system of personal government which had done its work under the Tudors. With the republican and anti-monarchical theories indeed that Calvinism had begotten elsewhere, English Calvinism showed as yet no sort of sympathy. The theories of resistance, of a people's right to judge and depose its rulers, which had been heard in the heat of the Marian persecution, had long sunk into silence. The loyalty of the Puritan gentleman was as fervent as that of his fellows. But with the belief of the Calvinist went necessarily a new and higher sense of political order. The old conception of personal rule, the dependence of a nation on the arbitrary will of its ruler, was jarring everywhere more and more with the religious as well as the philosophic impulses of the time. Men of the most different tendencies were reaching forward to the same conception of law. Bacon sought for universal laws in material nature. Hooker asserted the rule of law over the spiritual world. It was in the same way that the Puritan sought for a divine law by which the temporal kingdoms around him might be raised into a kingdom of Christ. The diligence with which he searched the Scriptures sprang from his earnestness to discover a

Divine Will which in all things, great or small, he might implicitly obey. But this implicit obedience was reserved for the Divine Will alone; for human ordinances derived their strength only from their correspondence with the revealed law of God. The Puritan was bound by his religion to examine every claim made on his civil and spiritual obedience by the powers that be; and to own or reject the claim, as it accorded with the higher duty which he owed to God. "In matters of faith," a Puritan wife tells us of her husband, "his reason always submitted to the Word of God; but in all other things the greatest names in the world would not lead him without reason."

Puritanism and the Crown.

It was plain that an impassable gulf parted such a temper as this from the temper of unquestioning devotion to the Crown which the Tudors termed loyalty; for it was a temper not only legal, but even pedantic in its legality, intolerant from its very sense of a moral order and law of the lawlessness and disorder of a personal tyranny, a temper of criticism, of judgement, and, if need be, of stubborn and unconquerable resistance. The temper of the Puritan indeed was no temper of mere revolt. His resistance, if he was forced to resist, would spring not from any disdain of kingly authority, but from his devotion to an authority higher and more sacred than that of kings. He had as firm a faith as the nation at large in the divine right of the sovereign, in the sacred character of the throne. It was in fact just because his ruler's authority had a divine origin that he obeyed him. But the nation about the throne seemed to the Puritan not less divinely ordered a thing than the throne itself; it was the voice of God, inspiring and directing, which spoke through its history and its laws; it was God that guided to wisdom the hearts of Englishmen in Parliament assembled as He guided to wisdom the hearts of kings. Never was the respect for positive law so profound; never was the reverence for Parliaments so great as at the death of Elizabeth. There was none of the modern longing for a king that reigned

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without governing; no conscious desire shows itself anywhere to meddle with the actual exercize of the royal administration. But the Puritan could only conceive of the kingly power as of a power based upon constitutional tradition, controlled by constitutional law, and acting in willing harmony with that body of constitutional counsellors in the two Houses, who represented the wisdom and the will of the realm.

Puritanism and society.

It was in the creation of such a temper as this that Puritanism gave its noblest gift to English politics. It gave a gift hardly less noble to society at large in its conception of social equality. Their common calling, their common brotherhood in Christ, annihilated in the mind of the Puritans that overpowering sense of social distinctions which characterized the age of Elizabeth. There was no open break with social traditions; no open revolt against the social subordination of class to class. But within these forms of the older world beat for the first time the spirit which was to characterize the new. The meanest peasant felt himself ennobled as a child of God. The proudest noble recognized a spiritual equality in the poorest "saint." The great social revolution of the Civil Wars and the Protectorate was already felt in the demeanour of English gentlemen. "He had a loving and sweet courtesy to the poorest," we are told of one of them, "and would often employ many spare hours with the commonest soldiers and poorest labourers." "He never disdained the meanest nor flattered the greatest." But it was felt even more in the new dignity and self-respect with which the consciousness of their "calling" invested the classes beneath the rank of the gentry. Take such a portrait as that which a turner in Eastcheap, Nehemiah Wallington, has left us of a London housewife, his mother. "She was very loving," he says, "and obedient to her parents, loving and kind to her husband, very tender-hearted to her children, loving all that were godly, much misliking the wicked and profane. She was a pattern of sobriety unto many, very

seldom was seen abroad except at church; when others recreated themselves at holidays and other times, she would take her needle-work and say 'here is my recreation.' . . God had given her a pregnant wit and an excellent memory. She was very ripe and perfect in all stories of the Bible, likewise in all the stories of the Martyrs, and could readily turn to them; she was also perfect and well seen in the English Chronicles, and in the descents of the Kings of England. She lived in holy wedlock with her husband twenty years, wanting but four days."

Puritanism and human conduct.

Where the new conception of life told even more powerfully than on politics or society was in its bearing on the personal temper and conduct of men. There was a sudden loss of the passion, the caprice, the subtle and tender play of feeling, the breadth of sympathy, the quick pulse of delight, which had marked the age of Elizabeth; but on the other hand life gained in moral grandeur, in a sense of the dignity of manhood, in orderliness and equable force. The larger geniality of the age that had passed away was replaced by an intense tenderness within the narrower circle of the home. Home, as we conceive it now, was the creation of the Puritan. Wife and child rose from mere dependants on the will of husband or father, as husband and father saw in them saints like himself, souls hallowed by the touch of a divine Spirit and called with a divine calling like his own. The sense of spiritual fellowship gave a new tenderness and refinement to the common family affections. "He was as kind a father," says a Puritan wife of her husband, "as dear a brother, as good a master, as faithful a friend as the world had." The wilful and lawless passion of the Renascence made way for a manly purity. "Neither in youth nor riper years could the most fair or enticing woman draw him into unnecessary familiarity or dalliance. Wise and virtuous women he loved, and delighted in all pure and holy and unblameable conversation with them, but so as

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never to excite scandal or temptation. Scurrilous discourse even among men he abhorred; and though he sometimes took pleasure in wit and mirth, yet that which was mixed with impurity he never could endure." A higher conception of duty coloured men's daily actions. To the Puritan the wilfulness of life, in which the men of the Renascence had revelled, seemed unworthy of life's character and end. His aim was to attain self-command, to be master of himself, of his thought and speech and acts. A certain gravity and reflectiveness gave its tone to the lightest details of his converse with the world about him. His temper, quick as it might naturally be, was kept under strict control. In his discourse he was on his guard against talkativeness and frivolity, striving to be deliberate in speech, and "ranking the words beforehand." His life was orderly and methodical, sparing of diet and self-indulgence; he rose early; "he never was at any time idle, and hated to see any one else so." The new sobriety and self-restraint showed itself in a change of dress. The gorgeous colours and jewels of the Renascence disappeared. The Puritan squire "left off very early the wearing of anything that was costly, yet in his plainest negligent habit appeared very much a gentleman."

Puritanism and culture.

The loss of colour and variety in costume reflected no doubt a certain loss of colour and variety in life itself. But as yet Puritanism was free from any break with the harmless gaieties of the world about it. The lighter and more elegant sides of the Elizabethan culture harmonized well enough with the temper of the Calvinist gentleman. The figure of such a Puritan as Colonel Hutchinson stands out from his wife's canvass with the grace and tenderness of a portrait by Vandyck. She dwells on the personal beauty which distinguished his youth, on "his teeth even and white as the purest ivory," "his hair of brown, very thick-set in his youth, softer than the finest silk, curling with loose great rings at the ends." Serious as was his temper in graver matters, the young squire of Owthorpe was fond

of hawking, and piqued himself on his skill in dancing and fence. His artistic taste showed itself in a critical love of "paintings, sculpture, and all liberal arts," as well as in the pleasure he took in his gardens, "in the improvement of his grounds, in planting groves and walks and forest-trees." If he was "diligent in his examination of the Scriptures," "he had a great love for music and often diverted himself with a viol, on which he played masterly."

Milton.

The strength however of the religious movement lay rather among the middle and professional classes than among the gentry; and it is in a Puritan of this class that we find the fullest and noblest expression of the new influence which was leavening the temper of the time. John Milton is not only the highest but the completest type of Puritanism. His life is absolutely contemporaneous with his cause. He was born when it began to exercize a direct influence over English politics and English religion; he died when its effort to mould them into its own shape was over, and when it had again sunk into one of many influences to which we owe our English character. His earlier verse, the pamphlets of his riper years, the epics of his age, mark with a singular precision the three great stages in its history. His youth shows us how much of the gaiety, the poetic ease, the intellectual culture of the Renascence, lingered in a Puritan home. Scrivener and "precisian" as his father was, he was a skilled musician, and the boy inherited his father's skill on lute and organ. One of the finest outbursts in the scheme of education which he put forth at a later time is a passage in which he vindicates the province of music as an agent in moral training. His home, his tutor, his school were all rigidly Puritan; but there was nothing narrow or illiberal in his early training. "My father," he says, "destined me while yet a little boy to the study of humane letters; which I seized with such eagerness that from the twelfth year of my age I scarcely ever went from my lessons to bed before midnight." But

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to the Greek, Latin, and Hebrew he learned at school, the scrivener advised him to add Italian and French. Nor were English letters neglected. Spenser gave the earliest turn to the boy's poetic genius. In spite of the war between playwright and precisian, a Puritan youth could still in Milton's days avow his love of the stage, "if Jonson's learned sock be on, or sweetest Shakspere, Fancy's child, warble his native woodnotes wild," and gather from the "masques and antique pagantry" of the court-revel hints for his own "Comus" and "Arcades." Nor does any shadow of the coming struggle with the Church disturb the young scholar's reverie, as he wanders beneath "the high embowed roof, with antique pillars massy proof, and storied windows richly dight, casting a dim religious light," or as he hears "the pealing organ blow to the full-voiced choir below, in service high and anthem clear"

Milton's enjoyment of the gaiety of life stands in bright contrast with the gloom and sternness which strife and persecution fostered in Puritanism at a later time. In spite of a "certain reservedness of natural disposition," which shrank from "festivities and jests, in which I acknowledge my faculty to be very slight," the young singer could still enjoy the "jest and youthful jollity" of the world around him, its "quips and cranks and wanton wiles;" he could join the crew of Mirth, and look pleasantly on at the village fair, "where the jolly rebecks sound to many a youth and many a maid, dancing in the chequered shade." There was nothing ascetic in Milton's look, in his slender, vigorous frame, his face full of a delicate yet serious beauty, the rich brown hair which clustered over his brow; and the words we have quoted show his sensitive enjoyment of all that was beautiful. But his pleasures were "unreproved." From coarse or sensual self-indulgence the young Puritan turned with disgust: "A certain reservedness of nature, an honest haughtiness and self-esteem, kept me still above those low descents of

mind." He drank in an ideal chivalry from Spenser, though his religion and purity disdained the outer pledge on which chivalry built up its fabric of honour. "Every free and gentle spirit," said Milton, "without that oath, ought to be born a knight." It was with this temper that he passed from his London school, St. Paul's, to Christ's College at Cambridge, and it was this temper that he preserved throughout his University career. He left Cambridge, as he said afterwards, "free from all reproach, and approved by all honest men," with a purpose of self-dedication "to that same lot, however mean or high, towards which time leads me and the will of heaven."

The narrowness of Puritanism

Even in the still calm beauty of a life such as this we catch the sterner tones of the Puritan temper. The very height of the Puritan's aim, the intensity of his moral concentration, brought with them a loss of the genial delight in all that was human which gave its charm to the age of Elizabeth. "If ever God instilled an intense love of moral beauty into the mind of any man," said the great Puritan poet, "he has instilled it into mine." "Love Virtue," closed his "Comus," "she alone is free!" But this passionate love of virtue and of moral beauty, if it gave strength to human conduct, narrowed human sympathy and human intelligence. Already in Milton we note "a certain reservedness of temper," a contempt for "the false estimates of the vulgar," a proud withdrawal from the meaner and coarser life around him. Great as was his love for Shakspere, we can hardly fancy him delighting in Falstaff. In minds of a less cultured order, this moral tension ended, no doubt, in a hard unsocial sternness of life. The ordinary Puritan "loved all that were godly, much misliking the wicked and profane." His bond to other men was not the sense of a common manhood, but the recognition of a brotherhood among the elect. Without the pale of the saints lay a world which was hateful to them, because it was the enemy of their God. It is this utter isolation from the "ungodly" that explains the contrast which startles us between the

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inner tenderness of the Puritans and the ruthlessness of so many of their actions. Cromwell, whose son's death (in his own words) went to his heart "like a dagger, indeed it did!" and who rode away sad and wearied from the triumph of Marston Moor, burst into horse-play as he signed the death-warrant of the King.

Its extravagance.

A temper which had lost sympathy with the life of half the world around it could hardly sympathize with the whole of its own life. Humour, the faculty which above all corrects exaggeration and extravagance, died away before the new stress and strain of existence. The absolute devotion of the Puritan to a Supreme Will tended more and more to rob him of all sense of measure and proportion in common matters. Little things became great things in the glare of religious zeal; and the godly man learnt to shrink from a surplice, or a mince-pie at Christmas, as he shrank from impurity or a lie. Nor was this all. The self-restraint and sobriety which marked the Calvinist limited itself wholly to his outer life. In his inner soul sense, reason, judgement, were too often overborne by the terrible reality of invisible things. Our first glimpse of Oliver Cromwell is as a young country squire and farmer in the marsh-levels around Huntingdon and St. Ives, buried from time to time in a deep melancholy, and haunted by fancies of coming death. "I live in Meshac," he writes to a friend, "which they say signifies Prolonging; in Kedar, which signifies Darkness; yet the Lord forsaketh me not." The vivid sense of a Divine Purity close to such men made the life of common men seem sin. "You know what my manner of life has been," Cromwell adds. "Oh, I lived in and loved darkness, and hated light. I hated godliness." Yet his worst sin was probably nothing more than an enjoyment of the natural buoyancy of youth, and a want of the deeper earnestness which comes with riper years. In imaginative tempers, like that of Bunyan, the struggle took a more picturesque form. John Bunyan was the son of a poor tinker at Elstow in Bedfordshire, and even in

childhood his fancy revelled in terrible visions of Heaven and Hell. "When I was but a child of nine or ten years old," he tells us, "these things did so distress my soul, that then in the midst of my merry sports and childish vanities, amidst my vain companions, I was often much cast down and afflicted in my mind therewith; yet could I not let go my sins." The sins he could not let go were a love of hockey and of dancing on the village green; for the only real fault which his bitter self-accusation discloses, that of a habit of swearing, was put an end to at once and for ever by a rebuke from an old woman. His passion for bell-ringing clung to him even after he had broken from it as a "vain practice;" and he would go to the steeple-house and look on, till the thought that a bell might fall and crush him in his sins drove him panic-stricken from the door. A sermon against dancing and games drew him for a time from these indulgences; but the temptation again overmastered his resolve. "I shook the sermon out of my mind, and to my old custom of sports and gaming I returned with great delight. But the same day, as I was in the midst of a game of cat, and having struck it one blow from the hole, just as I was about to strike it the second time, a voice did suddenly dart from heaven into my soul, which said, 'Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to Heaven, or have thy sins and go to Hell?' At this I was put in an exceeding maze; wherefore, leaving my cat upon the ground, I looked up to heaven; and was as if I had with the eyes of my understanding seen the Lord Jesus looking down upon me, as being very hotly displeased with me, and as if He did severely threaten me with some grievous punishment for those and other ungodly practices."

Belief in witchcraft

The vivid sense of a supernatural world which breathes through words such as these, the awe and terror with which it pressed upon the life of men, found their most terrible expression in the belief in witchcraft. The dread of Satanic intervention indeed was not peculiar to the

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Puritan. It had come down from the earliest ages of the Christian Church, and had been fanned into a new intensity at the close of the middle ages by the physical calamities and moral scepticism which threw their gloom over the world. Joan of Arc was a witch to every Englishman, and the wife of Duke Humphrey of Gloucester paced the streets of London, candle in hand, as a convicted sorceress. But it was not till the chaos and turmoil of the Reformation put its strain on the spiritual imagination of men that the belief in demoniacal possession deepened into a general panic. The panic was common to both Catholics and Protestants; it was in Catholic countries indeed that the persecution of supposed witches was carried on longest and most ruthlessly. Among Protestant countries England was the last to catch the general terror; and the Act of 1541, the first English statute passed against witchcraft, was far milder in tone than the laws of any other European country. Witchcraft itself, where no death could be proved to have followed from it, was visited only with pillory and imprisonment; where death had issued from it, the penalty was the gallows and not the stake. Even this statute was repealed in the following reign. But the fierce religious strife under Mary roused a darker fanaticism; and when Elizabeth mounted the throne preacher after preacher assured her that a multitude of witches filled the land. "Witches and sorcerers," cried Bishop Jewel, "within these few years are marvellously increased within your grace's realm. Your grace's subjects pine away even unto the death; their colour fadeth, their flesh rotteth, their speech is benumbed, their senses are bereft!" Before remonstrances such as these the statute against witchcraft was again enacted; but though literature and the drama show the hold which a belief in satanic agency had gained on the popular fancy, the temper of the times was too bold and self-reliant, its intelligence too keen and restless, its tone too secular, to furnish that atmosphere of panic in which fanaticism is bred.

It was not till the close of the Queen's reign, as hope darkened round Protestantism and the Puritan temper woke a fresh faith in the supernatural, that the belief in witchcraft and the persecution of the unhappy women who were held to be witches became a marked feature of the time. To men who looked on the world about them and the soul within them as battle-fields for a never-ceasing contest between God and the Devil, it was natural enough to ascribe every evil that happened to man, either in soul or body, to the invisible agency of the spirit of ill. A share of his supernatural energies was the bait by which he was held to lure the wicked to their own destruction; and women above all were believed to barter their souls for the possession of power which lifted them above the weakness of their sex. Sober men asserted that the beldame, whom boys hooted in the streets and who groped in the gutter for bread, could blast the corn with mildew and lame the oxen in the plough, that she could smite her persecutors with pains and sickness, that she could rouse storms in the sky and strew every shore with the wrecks of ships and the corpses of men, that as night gathered round she could mount her broomstick and sweep through the air to the witches' Sabbat, to yield herself in body and soul to the demons of ill. The nascent scepticism that startled at tales such as these was hushed before the witness of the Bible, for to question the existence of sorcerer or dæmoniac seemed questioning the veracity of the Scriptures themselves. Pity fell before the stern injunction "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live"; and the squire who would have shrunk from any conscious cruelty as from a blow looked on without ruth as the torturers ran needles into the witch's flesh, or swam her in the witch's pool, or hurried her to the witch's stake.

The Protestant defeat.

But the terror with which the Puritan viewed these proofs of a new energy in the powers of ill found a wider sphere of action as he saw their new activity and success in the religious and political world about him. At the

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opening of Elizabeth's reign every Protestant had looked forward to a world-wide triumph of the Gospel. If Italy and Spain clung blindly to the Papacy, elsewhere, alike on the Danube or the Rhine, on the Elbe or the Seine, the nations of Europe seemed to have risen in irreconcileable revolt against Rome. But the prospect of such a triumph had long since disappeared. At the crisis of the struggle a Catholic re-action had succeeded in holding Protestantism at bay, and after years of fierce combat Rome had begun definitely to win ground. The peaceful victories of the Jesuits were backed by the arms of Spain, and Europe was gradually regained till the policy of Philip the Second was able to aim its blows at the last strongholds of Calvinism in the west. Philip was undoubtedly worsted in the strife. England was saved by its defeat of the Armada. The United Provinces of the Netherlands rose into a great power as well through their own dogged heroism as through the genius of William the Silent. At a moment too when all hope seemed gone France was rescued from the grasp of the Catholic League by the unconquerable energy of Henry of Navarre. But even in its defeat Catholicism gained ground. England alone remained unaffected by its efforts. In the Low Countries the Reformation was finally driven from the Walloon Provinces, from Brabant, and from Flanders. In France Henry the Fourth found himself compelled to purchase Paris by a mass; and the conversion of the King was the beginning of a quiet breaking up of the Huguenot party. Nobles and scholars alike forsook the cause of heresy, and though Calvinism remained dominant south of the Loire, it lost all hope of winning France as a whole to its side.

Puritan intolerance.

At Elizabeth's death therefore the temper of every earnest Protestant, in England as elsewhere, was that of a man who after cherishing the hope of a crowning victory is forced to look on at a crushing and irremediable defeat. The dream of a Reformation of the universal Church was

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utterly at an end. Though the fierce strife of religions seemed for a while to have died down, the borders of Protestantism were narrowing every day, nor was there a sign that the triumph of the Papacy was arrested. Even the older Lutheranism of Germany was threatened; and the minds of men were already presaging the struggle which was to end in the Thirty Years' War. Such a struggle could be no foreign strife to the Puritan. The war in the Palatinate kindled a fiercer flame in the English Parliament than all the aggressions of the monarchy; and Englishmen followed the campaigns of Gustavus with even keener interest than the trial of Hampden. We shall see how great a part this sympathy with outer Protestantism played in the earlier struggle between England and the Stuarts: but it played as great a part in determining the Puritan attitude towards religion at home. As hope after hope died into defeat and disaster the mood of the Puritan grew sterner and more intolerant. The system of compromise by which the Tudors had held England together became more and more distasteful to him. To one who looked on himself as a soldier of God and as a soldier who was fighting a losing battle, the struggle with the Papacy was no matter for compromise. It was a struggle between light and darkness, between life and death. No innovation in faith or worship was of small account if it tended in the direction of Rome. The peril in fact was too great to admit of tolerance or moderation. At a moment when all that he hated was gaining ground on all that he loved, the Puritan saw the one security for what he held to be truth in drawing a hard and fast line between that truth and what he held to be falsehood.

Hooker.

This dogged concentration of thought and feeling on a single issue told with a fatal effect on his theology. The spirit of the Renascence had been driven for a while from the field of religion by the strife between Catholic and Protestant; and in the upgrowth of a more rigid system of dogma, whether on the one side or on the other, the

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work of More and Colet seemed to be undone. But no sooner had the strife lost its older intensity, no sooner had a new Christendom fairly emerged from the troubled waters, than the Renascence again made its influence felt. Its voice was heard above all in Richard Hooker, a clergyman who had been Master of the Temple, but had been driven by his distaste for the controversies of its pulpit from London to a Wiltshire vicarage at Boscombe, which he exchanged at a later time for the parsonage of Bishopsbourne among the quiet meadows of Kent. During the later years of Elizabeth he built up in these still retreats the stately fabric of his "Ecclesiastical Polity." The largeness of temper which marked all the nobler minds of his day, the philosophic breadth which is seen as clearly in Shakspere as in Bacon, was united in Hooker with a grandeur and stateliness of style which raised him to the highest rank among English prose writers. Divine as he was, his spirit and method were philosophical rather than theological. Against the ecclesiastical dogmatism of Presbyterian or Catholic he set the authority of reason. He abandoned the narrow ground of Scriptural argument to base his conclusions on the general principles of moral and political science, on the eternal obligations of natural law. The Puritan system rested on the assumption that an immutable rule for human action in all matters relating to religion, to worship, and to the discipline and constitution of the Church, was laid down, and only laid down, in the words of Scripture. Hooker urged that a divine order exists not in written revelation only, but in the moral relations, the historical developement, and the social and political institutions of men. He claimed for human reason the province of determining the laws of this order; of distinguishing between what is changeable and unchangeable in them, between what is eternal and what is temporary in the Bible itself. It was easy for him to push on to the field of ecclesiastical controversy where men like Cartwright were fighting the battle of Presby-

terianism, to show that no form of Church government had ever been of indispensable obligation, and that ritual observances had in all ages been left to the discretion of churches and determined by the differences of times.

His influence on the Church.

From the moment of its appearance the effect of the "Ecclesiastical Polity" was felt in the broader and more generous stamp which it impressed on the temper of the national Church. Hooker had in fact provided with a theory and placed on grounds of reason that policy of comprehension which had been forced on the Tudors by the need of holding England together, and from which the Church, as it now existed, had sprung. But the truth on which Hooker based his argument was of far higher value than his argument itself. The acknowledgement of a divine order in human history, of a divine law in human reason, harmonized with the noblest instincts of the Elizabethan age. Raleigh's effort to grasp as a whole the story of mankind, Bacon's effort to bring all outer nature to the test of human intelligence, were but the crowning manifestations of the two main impulses of their time, its rationalism and its humanity. Both found expression in the work of Hooker; and coloured through its results the after history of the English Church. The historical feeling showed itself in a longing to ally the religion of the present with the religion of the past, to find a unity of faith and practice with the Church of the Fathers, to claim part in that great heritage of Catholic tradition, both in faith and worship, which the Papacy so jealously claimed as its own. Such a longing seized as much on tender and poetic tempers like George Herbert's as on positive and prosaic tempers, such as that of Laud. The one started back from the bare, intense spiritualism of the Puritan to find nourishment for his devotion in the outer associations which the piety of ages had grouped around it, in holy places and holy things, in the stillness of church and altar, in the pathos and exultation of prayer and praise, in the aweful mystery of sacraments. The

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narrow and external mood of the other, unable to find standing ground in the purely personal relation between man and God which formed the basis of Calvinism, fell back on the consciousness of a living Christendom, preserving through the ages a definite faith and worship, and which, torn and rent as it seemed, was soon to resume its ancient unity.

The Arminians.

While the historical feeling which breathes in Hooker's work took form in the new passion for tradition and ceremonialism, the appeal which it addressed to human reason produced a school of philosophical thinkers whose timid upgrowth was almost lost in the clash of warring creeds about them, but who were destined—as the latitudinarians of later days—to make as deep an impression as their dogmatic rivals on the religious thought of their countrymen. As yet however this rationalizing movement hovered on the borders of the system of belief which it was so keenly to attack; it limited itself rather to the work of moderating and reconciling, to recognizing with Calixtus the pettiness of the points of difference which parted Christendom and the greatness of its points of agreement, or to revolting with Arminius from the more extreme tenets of Calvin and Calvin's followers and pleading like him for some cooperation on man's part with the work of grace. As yet Arminianism was little more than a reaction against a system that contradicted the obvious facts of life, a desire to bring theology into some sort of harmony with human experience; but it was soon to pass by a fatal necessity into a wider variance, and to gather round it into one mass of opposition every tendency of revolt which time was disclosing against the Calvinism which now reigned triumphant in Protestant theology.

The doctrinal bigotry of Puritanism.

From the belief in humanity or in reason which gave strength to such a revolt the Puritan turned doggedly away. In the fierce white light of his idealism human effort seemed weakness, human virtue but sin, human reason but folly. Absorbed as he was in the thought of God, craving

for nothing less than a divine righteousness, a divine wisdom, a divine strength, he grasped the written Bible as the law of God and concentrated every energy in the effort to obey it. The dogma of justification, the faith that without merit or act of man God would save and call to holiness his own elect, was the centre of his creed. And with such a creed he felt that the humanity of the Renascence, the philosophy of the thinker, the comprehension of the statesman, were alike at war. A policy of comprehension seemed to him simply a policy of faithlessness to God. Ceremonies which in an hour of triumph he might have regarded as solaces to weak brethren, he looked on as acts of treason in this hour of defeat. Above all he would listen to no words of reconciliation with a religious system in which he saw nothing but a lie, nor to any pleas for concession in what he held to be truth. The craving of the Arminian for a more rational theology he met by a fiercer loyalty to the narrowest dogma. Archbishop Whitgift had striven to force on the Church of England a set of articles which embodied the tenets of an extreme Calvinism; and one of the wisest acts of Elizabeth had been to disallow them. But hateful as Whitgift on every other ground was to the Puritans, they never ceased to demand the adoption of his Lambeth Articles.

Its hatred of sectaries.

And as he would admit no toleration within the sphere of doctrine, so would the Puritan admit no toleration within the sphere of ecclesiastical order. That the Church of England should both in ceremonies and in teaching take a far more distinctively Protestant attitude than it had hitherto done, every Puritan was resolved. But there was as yet no general demand for any change in the form of its government, or of its relation to the State. Though the wish to draw nearer to the mass of the Reformed Churches won a certain amount of favour for the Presbyterian form of organization which they had adopted, as an obligatory system of Church discipline Presbyterianism had been embraced by but a few of the

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English clergy, and by hardly any of the English laity. Nor was there any tendency in the mass of the Puritans towards a breach in the system of religious conformity which Elizabeth had constructed. On the contrary, what they asked was for its more rigorous enforcement. That Catholics should be suffered under whatever pains and penalties to preserve their faith and worship in a Protestant Commonwealth was abhorrent to them. Nor was Puritan opinion more tolerant to the Protestant sectaries who were beginning to find the State Church too narrow for their enthusiasm. Elizabeth herself could not feel a bitterer abhorrence of the "Brownists" (as they were called from the name of their founder Robert Brown) who rejected the very notion of a national Church, and asserted the right of each congregation to perfect independence of faith and worship. To the zealot whose whole thought was of the fight with Rome, such an assertion seemed the claim of a right to mutiny in the camp, a right of breaking up Protestant England into a host of sects too feeble to hold Rome at bay. Cartwright himself denounced the wickedness of the Brownists; Parliament, Puritan as it was, passed in 1593 a statute against them; and there was a general assent to the stern measures of repression by which Brown himself was forced to fly to the Netherlands. Two of his fellow-congregationalists were seized and put to death on charges of sedition and heresy. Of their followers many, as we learn from a petition in 1592, were driven into exile, "and the rest which remain in her Grace's land greatly distressed through imprisonment and other great troubles." The persecution in fact did its work. "As for those which we call Brownists," wrote Bacon, "being when they were at the most a very small number of very silly and base people, here and there in corners dispersed, they are now, thanks to God, by the good remedies that have been used, suppressed and worn out; so that there is scarce any news of them." The execution of three Nonconformists in the following year was in fact

followed by the almost utter extermination of their body. But against this persecution no Puritan voice was raised.

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Its wish for reforms.

All in fact that the bulk of the Puritans asked was a change in the outer ritual of worship which should correspond to the advance towards a more pronounced Protestantism that had been made by the nation at large during the years of Elizabeth's reign. Their demands were as of old for the disuse of "superstitious ceremonies." To modern eyes the points which they selected for change seem trivial enough. But they were in fact of large significance. To reject the sign of the Cross in baptism was to repudiate the whole world of ceremonies of which it was a survivor. The disuse of the surplice would have broken down the last outer difference which parted the minister from the congregation, and manifested to every eye the spiritual equality of layman and priest. Kneeling at the Communion might be a mere act of reverence, but formally to discontinue such an act was emphatically to assert a disbelief in the sacramental theories of Catholicism. During the later years of Elizabeth reverence for the Queen had hindered any serious pressure for changes to which she would never assent; but a general expectation prevailed that at her death some change would be made. Even among men of secular stamp there was a general conviction of the need of some concession to the religious sentiment of the nation. They had clung to the usages which the Puritans denounced so long as they were aids in hindering a religious severance throughout the land. But whatever value the retention of such ceremonies might have had in facilitating the quiet passage of the bulk of Englishmen from the old worship to the new had long since passed away. England as a whole was Protestant; and the Catholics who remained were not likely to be drawn to the national Church by trifles such as these. Instead of being the means of hindering religious division the usages had now become means of creating it. It was on this ground that statesmen who had little sympathy

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with the religious spirit about them pleaded for the purchase of religious and national union by ecclesiastical reforms. "Why," asked Bacon, "should the civil state be purged and restored by good and wholesome laws made every three years in Parliament assembled, devising remedies as fast as time breedeth mischief, and contrariwise the ecclesiastical state still continue upon the dregs of time, and receive no alteration these forty-five years or more?"

CHAPTER II.

THE KING OF SCOTS.

SUCH was the temper of England at the death of Elizabeth; and never had greater issues hung on the character of a ruler than hung on the character of her successor. Had he shared the sympathy with popular feeling which formed the strength of the Tudors, time might have brought peaceably about that readjustment of political forces which the growth of English energies had made a necessity. Had he possessed the genius of a great statesman, he might have distinguished in the mingled mass of impulses about him between the national and the sectarian, and have given scope to the nobleness of Puritanism while resolutely checking its bigotry. It was no common ill-fortune that set at such a crisis on the throne a ruler without genius as without sympathy, and that broke the natural progress of the people by a conflict between England and its kings.

James Stuart.

Throughout the last days of Elizabeth most men had looked forward to a violent struggle for the crown. The more bigoted Catholics supported the pretensions of Isabella, the eldest daughter of Philip the Second of Spain. The house of Suffolk, which through the marriage of Lady Catharine Grey with Lord Hertford was now represented by their son, Lord Beauchamp, still clung to its parliamentary title under the will of Henry the Eighth. Even if the claim of the house of Stuart was admitted, there were some who held that the Scottish king, as an alien

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by birth, had no right of inheritance, and that the succession to the crown lay in the next Stuart heiress, Arabella Stuart, a granddaughter of Lady Lennox by her younger son, Darnley's brother. But claims such as these found no general support. By a strange good fortune every great party in the realm saw its hopes realized in King James. The mass of the Catholics, who had always been favourable to a Scottish succession, were persuaded that the son of Mary Stuart would at least find toleration for his mother's co-religionists; and as they watched the distaste for Presbyterian rule and the tendency to comprehension which James had already manifested, they listened credulously to his emissaries. On the other hand the Puritans saw in him the king of a Calvinistic people, bred in a Church which rejected the ceremonies that they detested and upheld the doctrines which they longed to render supreme, and who had till now, whatever his strife might have been with the claims of its ministers, shown no dissent from its creed or from the rites of its worship. Nor was he less acceptable to the more secular tempers who guided Elizabeth's counsels. The bulk of English statesmen saw too clearly the advantages of a union of the two kingdoms under a single head to doubt for a moment as to the succession of James. If Elizabeth had refused to allow his claim to be formally recognized by Parliament she had pledged herself to suffer no detriment to be done to it there; and in her later days Cecil had come forward to rescue the young King from his foolish intrigues with English parties and Catholic powers, and to assure him of support. No sooner in fact was the Queen dead than James Stuart was owned as King by the Council without a dissentient voice.

His youth.

To James himself the change was a startling one. He had been a King indeed from his cradle. But his kingdom was the smallest and meanest of European realms, and his actual power had been less than that of many an English peer. For years he had been the mere sport of warring

nobles who governed in his name. Their rule was a sheer anarchy. For a short while after Mary's flight Murray showed the genius of a born master of men; but at the opening of 1570 his work was ended by the shot of a Hamilton. "What Bothwell-haugh has done," Mary wrote joyously from her English prison at the news, "has been done without order of mine: but I thank him all the more for it." The murder in fact plunged Scotland again into a chaos of civil war which, as the queen shrewdly foresaw, could only tend to the after-profit of the Crown. A year later the next regent, the child-king's grandfather, Lord Lennox, was slain in a fray at Stirling; and it was only when the regency passed into the strong hand of Morton at the close of 1572, and when England intervened in the cause of order, that the land won a short breathing-space. Edinburgh, the last fortress held in Mary's name, surrendered to a force sent by Elizabeth; its captain, Kirkcaldy of Grange, was hung for treason in the market-place; and the stern justice of Morton forced peace upon the warring lords But hardly five years had passed when a union of his rivals and their adroit crowning of the boy-king put an end to Morton's regency and gave a fresh aim to the factions who were tearing Scotland to pieces. To get hold of the King's person, to wield in his name the royal power, became the end of their efforts. The boy was safe only at Stirling; and even at Stirling a fray at the gate all but transferred him from the Erskines to fresh hands. It was in vain that James sought security in a body-guard; or strove to baffle the nobles by recalling a cousin, Esme Stuart, from France, and giving him the control of affairs. A sudden flight back to Stirling only saved him from seizure at Doune; and a few months later, as James hunted at Ruthven, he found the hand of the Master of Glamis on his bridle-rein. "Better bairns greet than bearded men," was the gruff answer to his tears, as his favourite fled into exile and the boy-king saw himself again a tool in the hands of the lords.

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Such was the world in which James had grown to manhood; a world of brutal swordsmen, in whose hands the boy who shrank from the very sight of a sword seemed helpless.

His purpose.

But if the young King had little physical courage, morally he proved fearless enough. He drew confidence in himself from a sense of his intellectual superiority to the men about him. From his earliest years indeed James showed a precocious cleverness; and as a child he startled grave councillors by his "discourse, walking up and down in the Lady Mar's hand, of knowledge and ignorance." It was his amazing self-reliance which enabled him to bear the strange loneliness of his life. He had nothing in common with the turbulent nobles whose wild cries he had heard from the walls of Stirling Castle, as they slew his grandfather in the streets of the town below. But he had just as little sympathy with the spiritual or political world which was springing into life around his cradle. The republican Buchanan was his tutor, and he was bred in the religious school of Knox; but he shrank instinctively from Calvinism with its consecration of rebellion, its assertion of human equality, its declaration of the responsibility of kings, while he detected and hated the republican drift of the thinkers of the Renascence. In later years James denounced the chronicles of both Buchanan and Knox as "infamous invectives," and would have had their readers punished "even as it were their authors risen again." His temper and purpose were in fact simply those of the Kings who had gone before him. He was a Stuart to the core; and from his very boyhood he set himself to do over again the work which the Stuarts had done.

The work of the Stuarts.

Their work had been the building up of the Scottish realm, its change from a medley of warring nobles into an ordered kingdom. Never had freedom been bought at a dearer price than it was bought by Scotland in its long War of Independence. Wealth and public order alike disappeared. The material prosperity of the country was

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brought to a standstill. The work of civilization was violently interrupted. The work of national unity was all but undone. The Highlanders were parted by a sharp line of division from the Lowlanders, while within the Lowlands themselves feudalism overmastered the crown. The nobles became almost wholly independent. The royal power, under the immediate successors of Bruce, sank into insignificance. From the walls of Stirling the Scotch Kings of that earlier time looked out on a realm where they could not ride thirty miles to north or to south save at the head of a host of armed men. With James the First began the work of building the monarchy up again from this utter ruin; but the wresting of Scotland from the grasp of its nobles was only wrought out in a struggle of life and death. Few figures are more picturesque than the figures of the young Scotch kings as they dash themselves against the iron circle which girds them round in their desperate efforts to rescue the crown from serfdom. They carry their life in their hands; a doom is on them; they die young and by violent deaths. One was stabbed by plotters in his bed-chamber. Another was stabbed in a peasant's hut where he had crawled for refuge after defeat. Another was slain by the bursting of a cannon. The fourth James fell more nobly at Flodden. The fifth died of a broken heart on the news of Solway Moss. But hunted and slain as they were, the kings clung stubbornly to the task they had set themselves.

The Stuarts and the Reformation.

They stood almost alone. The Scottish people was too weak as yet to form a check on the baronage; and the one force on which the crown could reckon was the force of the Church. To enrich the Church, to bind its prelates closely to the monarchy by the gift of social and political power, was the policy of every Stuart. A greater force than that of the Church lay in the dogged perseverance of the Kings themselves. Little by little their work was done. The great house of Douglas was broken at last.

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The ruin of lesser houses followed in its train, and under the fifth of the Jameses Scotland saw itself held firmly in the royal grasp. But the work of the Stuarts was hardly done when it seemed to be undone again by the Reformation. The prelates were struck down. The nobles were enormously enriched. The sovereign again stood alone in the face of the baronage. It was only by playing on their jealousies and divisions that Mary Stuart could withstand the nobles who banded themselves together to overawe the crown. Once she broke their ranks by her marriage with Darnley; and after the ill-fated close of this effort she strove again to break their ranks by her marriage with Bothwell. Again the attempt failed; and Mary fled into life-long exile, while the nobles, triumphant at last in the strife with the Crown, governed Scotland in the name of her child.

James and the nobles.

It was thus that in his boyhood James looked on the ruin of all that his fathers had wrought. But the wreck was not as utter as it seemed. Even in the storm of the Reformation the sense of royal authority had not wholly been lost; the craving for public order, and the conviction that order could only be found in obedience to the sovereign, had in fact been quickened by the outbreak of faction; and the rule of Murray and Morton had shown how easily the turbulent nobles could be bent by an energetic use of the royal power. Lonely and helpless as he seemed, James was still King, and he was a King who believed in his kingship. The implicit faith in his own divine right to rule the greatest in the land gave him a strength as great as that of the regents. At seventeen he was strong enough to break the yoke of the Douglases and to drive them over the English border. At eighteen he could bring the most powerful of the Protestant nobles, the Earl of Gowrie, to the block. A year later indeed the lords were back again; for the Armada was at hand, and Elizabeth distrusted the young King, who was intriguing at Paris and Madrid. English

help brought back the exiles; "there was no need of words," James said bitterly to the lords as they knelt before him with protestations of loyalty; "weapons had spoken loud enough." But their return was far from undoing his work. Elizabeth's pledges as to the succession, James's alliance with her against the Armada, restored the friendship of England; and once secure against English intervention the King had little difficulty in resuming his mastery at home. A significant ceremony showed that the strife with the nobles was at an end. James summoned them to Edinburgh, and called on them to lay aside their feuds with one another. The pledge was solemnly given, and each noble, "holding his chief enemy by the hand," walked in his doublet to the market-cross of the city, while the people sang aloud for joy.

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The policy of the Stuarts had at last reached its end, and James was master of the great houses that had so long overawed the Crown. But he was farther than ever from being absolute master of his realm. Amidst the turmoil of the Reformation a new force had come to the front. This was the Scottish people itself. Till now peasant and burgher had been of small account in the land. The towns were little more than villages. The peasants, scattered thinly over valley and hillside and winning a scant subsistence from a thankless soil, were too few and too poor to be a political force. They were of necessity dependent on their lords; and in the centuries of feudal anarchy which followed the War of Independence the strife of lord against lord made their life a mere struggle for existence. To know neither rest nor safety, to face danger every hour, to plough the field with arms piled carefully beside the furrow, to watch every figure that crossed the hillside in doubt whether it were foe or friend, to be roused from sleep by the slogan of the Highlander or the cry of the borderer as they swept sheep and kye from every homestead in the valley, to bear hunger and thirst and cold and nakedness, to cower within the peel-tower

The Scotch people.

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or lurk in the moorland while barn and byre went up in pitiless flame, to mount and ride at a lord's call on forays as pitiless, this was the rough school in which the Scotch peasant was trained through two hundred years. But it was a school in which he learned much. Suffering that would have degraded a meaner race into slaves only hardened and ennobled the temper of the Scotchman. It was from these ages of oppression and lawlessness that he drew the rugged fidelity, the dogged endurance, the shrewdness, the caution, the wariness, the rigid thrift, the noble self-dependence, the patience, the daring, which have distinguished him ever since. Nowhere did the Reformation do a grander work than in Scotland, but it was because nowhere were the minds of men so prepared for its work. The soil was ready for the seed. The developement of a noble manhood brought with it the craving for a spiritual and a national existence, and at the call of the Reformation the Scotch people rose suddenly into a nation and a Church.

Knox.

One well-known figure embodied the moral strength of the new movement. In the King's boyhood, amidst the wild turmoil which followed on Murray's fall, an old man bent with years and toil might have been seen creeping with a secretary's aid to the pulpit of St. Giles. But age and toil were powerless over the spirit of John Knox. "He believed to leave the pulpit at his first entry: but ere he had done with his sermon he was so active and vigorous that he was like to ding the pulpit into blads and spring out of it." It was in vain that men strove to pen the fiery words of the great preacher. "In the opening up of his text," says a devout listener, "he was moderate; but when he entered into application he made me so grew and tremble that I could not hold a pen to write." What gave its grandeur to the doctrine of Knox was his resolute assertion of a Christian order before which the social and political forces of the world about him shrank into insignificance. The meanest peasant, once called of God,

felt within him a strength that was stronger than the might of nobles, and a wisdom that was wiser than the state-craft of kings. In that mighty elevation of the masses which was embodied in the Calvinist doctrines of election and grace lay the germs of the modern principles of human equality. The fruits of such a teaching soon showed themselves in a new attitude of the people. "Here," said Melville, over the grave of John Knox, "here lies one who never feared the face of man;" and if Scotland still reverences the memory of the reformer it is because at that grave her peasant and her trader learned to look in the face of nobles and kings and "not be ashamed."

The Kirk and the people.

The moral power which Knox created was to express itself through the ecclesiastical forms which had been devised by the genius of Calvin. The new force of popular opinion was concentrated and formulated in an ordered system of kirk-sessions and presbyteries and provincial synods, while chosen delegates formed the General Assembly of the Kirk. In this organization of her churches, Scotland saw herself for the first time the possessor of a really representative system, of a popular government. In her Parliaments the peasant had no voice, the burgher a feeble and unimportant one. They were in fact but feudal gatherings of prelates and nobles, whose action was fettered by the precautions of the crown. Of real parliamentary life, such as was seen across the border, not a trace could be found in the assemblies which gathered round the Scottish kings; but a parliamentary life of the keenest and intensest order at once appeared among the lay and spiritual delegates who gathered to the General Assembly of the Kirk. Not only did Presbyterianism bind Scotland together as it had never been bound before by its administrative organization, but by the power it gave the lay elders in each congregation, and by the summons of laymen in an overpowering majority to the earlier Assemblies, it called the people at large to a voice, and as it

CHAP. II. turned out a decisive voice, in the administration of affairs.

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If its government by ministers gave it the outer look of an ecclesiastical despotism, no Church constitution has proved in practice so democratic as that of Scotland. Its influence in raising the nation at large to a consciousness of its power was shown by the change which passed from the moment of its establishment over the face of Scotch history.

The Kirk and the King.

The sphere of action to which it called the people was in fact not a mere ecclesiastical but a national sphere. Formally the Assembly meddled only with matters of religion; but in the creed of the Calvinist, as in the creed of the Catholic, the secular and the religious world were one. It was the office of the Church to enforce good and to rebuke evil; and social and political life fell alike within her "discipline." Feudalism received its death-blow when the noble who had wronged his wife or murdered his tenant sate humbled before the peasant elders on the stool of repentance. The new despotism which was growing up under the form of the monarchy found a sudden arrest in the challenge of the Kirk. When James summoned the preachers before his Council and arraigned their meetings as without warrant and seditious, "Mr. Andrew Melville could not abide it, but broke off upon the King in so zealous, powerful, and unresistible a manner that howbeit the King used his authority in most crabbed and choleric manner, yet Mr. Andrew bore him down, and uttered the commission as from the mighty God, calling the King but 'God's silly vassal;' and taking him by the sleeve, says this in effect, though with much hot reasoning and many interruptions; 'Sir, we will humbly reverence your Majesty always—namely, in public. But since we have this occasion to be with your Majesty in private, and the truth is that you are brought in extreme danger both of your life and crown, and with you the country and kirk of Christ is like to wreck, for not telling you the truth and giving of you a faithful counsel, we must

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discharge our duty therein or else be traitors both to Christ and you! And therefore, sir, as divers times before, so now again I must tell you, there are two kings and two kingdoms in Scotland. There is Christ Jesus the King, and his kingdom the Kirk, whose subject James the Sixth is, and of whose kingdom not a king, nor a lord, nor a head, but a member. And they whom Christ hath called to watch over his kirk and govern his spiritual kingdom have sufficient power and authority so to do both together and severally; the which no Christian king nor prince should control and discharge, but fortify and assist, otherwise not faithful servants nor members of Christ!'"

The ministers and the people.

It is idle to set aside words like these as the mere utterances of fanaticism or of priestly arrogance. James and his Council would have made swift work of mere fanatics or of arrogant priests. Why Melville could withdraw unharmed was because a people stood behind him, a people suddenly wakened to a consciousness of its will, and stern in the belief that a divine duty lay on it to press that will on its king. Through all the theocratic talk of the Calvinist ministers we see a popular power that fronts the crown. It is the Scotch people that rises into being under the guise of the Scotch Kirk. The men who led it were men with no official position or material power, for the nobles had stripped the Church of the vast endowments which had lured their sons and the royal bastards within the pale of its ministry. The ministers of the new communion were drawn from the burghers and peasantry or at best from the smaller gentry; and nothing in their social position aided them in withstanding the nobles or the crown. Their strength lay simply in the popular sympathy behind them, in their capacity of rousing national opinion through the pulpit, of expressing it through the Assembly. The claims which such men advanced, ecclesiastical as their garb might be, could not fail to be national in their issues. In struggling against episcopacy they were in fact struggling against any breaking up or impeding of that

CHAP. II. religious organization which alone enabled Scotland to withstand the claims of the crown. In jealously asserting the right of the General Assembly to meet every year and to discuss every question that met it, they were vindicating in the only possible fashion the right of the nation to rule itself in a parliamentary way. In asserting the liberty of the pulpit they were for the first time in the history of Europe recognizing the power of public opinion and fighting for freedom whether of thought or of speech. Strange to modern ears as their language may be, bigoted and narrow as their temper must often seem, it is well to remember the greatness of the debt we owe them. It was their stern resolve, their energy, their endurance that saved Scotland from a civil and religious despotism, and that in saving the liberty of Scotland saved English liberty as well.

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Andrew Melville.

The greatest of the successors of Knox was Andrew Melville. Two years after Knox's death Melville came fresh from a training among the French Huguenots to take up and carry forward his work. With less prophetic fire than his master he possessed as fierce a boldness, a greater disdain of secular compromises, a lofty pride in his calling, a bigoted faith in Calvinism that knew neither rest nor delay in its full establishment throughout the land As yet the system of Presbyterian faith and discipline, with the synods and assemblies in which it was embodied, though it had practically won its hold over southern Scotland, was without legal sanction. The demand of the ministers for a restitution of the Church lands and the resolve of the nobles not to part with their spoil had caused the rejection of the Book of Discipline by the Estates. The same spirit of greed secured the retention of a nominal episcopacy. Though the name of bishops and archbishops appeared "to many to savour of Papistry," bishops and archbishops were still named to vacant dioceses as milch-cows, through whom the revenues of the sees might be drained by the great nobles. Against such "Tulchan-bishops," as they were nicknamed by the people's scorn,

a "Tulchan" being a mere calf-skin stuffed with hay by which a cow was persuaded to give her milk after her calf was taken from her, Knox had not cared to protest; he had only taken care that they should be subject to the General Assembly, and deprived of all jurisdiction or authority beyond that of a Presbyterian "Superintendent." His strong political sense hindered a conflict on such a ground with the civil power, and without a conflict it was plain that no change could come. The Regent Morton, Calvinist as he was, supported the cause of Episcopacy, and the fact that bishops formed an integral part of the estates of the realm made any demand for their abolition distasteful to the large mass of men who always shrink from any constitutional revolution.

Presbyterianism established

But Melville threw aside all compromise. In 1580 the General Assembly declared the office of bishop abolished, as having "no sure warrant, authority, or good ground out of the Word of God." In 1581 it adopted a second Book of Discipline which organized the Church on the pure Calvinistic model and advanced the full Calvinistic claim to its spiritual independence and supremacy within the realm. When the Estates refused to sanction this book the Assembly sent it to every presbytery, and its gradual acceptance secured the organization of the Church. It was at this crisis that the appearance of Esme Stuart brought about the first reaction towards a revival of the royal power; and the Council under the guidance of the favourite struck at once at the preachers who denounced it. But their efforts to "tune the pulpits" were met by a bold defiance. "Though all the kings of the earth should call my words treason," replied one minister who was summoned to the Council board, "I am ready by good reason to prove them to be the very truth of God, and if need require to seal them with my blood." Andrew Melville, when summoned on the same charge of seditious preaching, laid a Hebrew Bible on the council table and "resolved to try conclusions on that only." What the

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Council shrank from "trying conclusions" with was the popular enthusiasm which backed these protests. When John Durie was exiled for words uttered in the pulpit, the whole town of Edinburgh met him on his return, "and going up the street with bare heads and loud voices sang to the praise of God till heaven and earth resounded."

James and the Kirk.

But it was this very popularity which roused the young king to action. Boy of eighteen as he was, no sooner had the overthrow of the Douglases and the judicial murder of Lord Gowrie freed James from the power of the nobles than he faced this new foe. Theologically his opinions were as Calvinistic as those of Melville himself, but in the ecclesiastical fabric of Calvinism, in its organization of the Church, in its annual assemblies, in its public discussion and criticism of acts of government through the pulpit, he saw an organized democracy which threatened his crown. And at this he struck as boldly as his forefathers had struck at the power of feudalism. The nobles, dreading the resumption of church lands, were with the king; and in 1584 an Act of the Estates denounced the judicial and legislative authority assumed by the General Assembly, provided that no subjects, temporal or spiritual, "take upon them to convocate or assemble themselves together for holding of councils, conventions, or assemblies," and demanded a pledge of obedience from every minister. For the moment the ministers submitted; and James prepared to carry out his victory by a policy of religious balance. The Catholic lords were still strong in northern and western Scotland; and firmly as the King was opposed to the dogmas of Catholicism he saw the use he might make of the Catholics as a check on the power of the Congregation. It was with this view that he shielded Lord Huntly and the Catholic nobles while he intrigued with the Guises abroad. But such a policy at such a juncture forced England to intervene. At a moment when the Armada was gathering in the Tagus, Elizabeth felt the need of securing Scotland against any revival of Catholi-

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cism; and her aid enabled the exiled lords to return in triumph in 1585. For the next ten years James was helpless in their hands. He was forced to ally himself with Elizabeth, to offer aid against the Armada, to make a Protestant marriage, to threaten action against Philip, to attack Huntly and the Catholic lords of the north on a charge of correspondence with Spain and to drive them from the realm. The triumph of the Protestant lords was a triumph of the Kirk. In 1592 the Acts of 1584 were repealed; Episcopacy was formally abolished; and the Calvinistic organization of the Church at last received legal sanction. All that James could save was the right of being present at the General Assembly, and of fixing a time and place for its annual meeting. It was in vain that the young King struggled and argued; in vain that he resolutely asserted himself to be supreme in spiritual as in civil matters; in vain that he showed himself a better scholar and a more learned theologian than the men who held him down. The preachers scolded him from the pulpit and bade him "to his knees" to seek pardon for his vanity; while the Assembly chided him for his "banning and swearing" and sent a deputation to confer with his Queen touching the "want of godly exercise among her maids."

James and Presbyterianism

The bitter memory of these years of humiliation dwelt with James to the last. They were fiercely recalled, when he mounted the English throne. "A Scottish Presbytery" he exclaimed at the Hampton Court Conference, "as well fitteth with monarchy as God and the Devil." Year after year he watched for the hour of deliverance, and every year brought it nearer. His mother's death gave fresh strength to his throne. The alliance with England, Elizabeth's pledge not to oppose his succession, left him practically heir of the English Crown. Freed from the dread of a Catholic reaction, the Queen was at liberty to indulge in her dread of Calvinism, and to sympathize with the fresh struggle which James was preparing to

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make against it. Her attitude as well as the growing certainty of his coming greatness as sovereign of both realms, had no doubt their influence in again strengthening the King's position; and his new power was seen in his renewed mastery over the Scottish lords. But this triumph over feudalism was only the opening of a decisive struggle with Calvinism. If he had defeated Huntly and his fellow-plotters, he refused to keep them in exile or to comply with the demand of the Church that he should refuse their services on the ground of religion. He would be King of a nation, he contended, and not of a part of it. The protest was a fair one; but the real secret of the King's policy towards the Catholics, as of his son's after him, was a "King-craft" which aimed at playing off one part of the nation against another to the profit of the crown. "The wisdom of the Council," said a defiant preacher, "is this, that ye must be served with all sorts of men to serve your purpose and grandeur, Jew and Gentile, Papist and Protestant. And because the ministers and Protestants in Scotland are over strong and control the King, they must be weakened and brought low."

The struggle with the Church.

It was with this end before him that James set finally to work in 1597. Cool, adroit, firm in his purpose, the young King seized on some wild outbreaks of the pulpit to assert a control over its utterances; a riot in Edinburgh in defence of the ministers enabled him to bring the town to submission by flooding its streets with Highlanders and Borderers; the General Assembly itself was made amenable to royal influence by its summons to Perth where the cooler temper of the northern ministers could be played off against the hot Presbyterianism of the ministers of the Lothians. It was the Assembly itself which consented to curtail the liberty of preaching and the liberty of assembling in presbytery and synod, as well as to make the King's consent needful for the appointment of every minister. What James was as stubbornly resolved on was the restoration of Episcopacy. He wished not only to

bridle but to rule the Church; and it was only through bishops that he could effectively rule it. The old tradition of the Stuarts had looked to the prelates for the support of the crown, and James saw keenly that the new force which had overthrown them was a force which threatened to overthrow the monarchy itself. It was the people which in its religious or its political guise was the assailant of both. And as their foe was the same, so James argued with the shrewd short-sightedness of his race, their cause was the same. "No bishop," ran his famous adage, "no King!" To restore the episcopate was from this moment his steady policy. But its actual restoration only followed on the failure of a long attempt to bring the Assembly round to a project of nominating representatives of itself in the Estates. The presence of such representatives would have strengthened the moral weight of the Parliament, while it diminished that of the Assembly, and in both ways would have tended to the advantage of the Crown. But cowed as the ministers now were, no pressure could bring them to do more than name delegates to vote according to their will in the Estates; and as such a plan foiled the King's scheme James was at last driven to use a statute which empowered him to name bishops as prelates with a seat in the Estates, though they possessed no spiritual status or jurisdiction. In 1600 two such prelates appeared in Parliament; and James followed up his triumph by the publication of his "Basilicon Dôron," an assertion of the divine right and absolute authority of Kings over all orders of men within their realms.

It is only by recalling the early history of James Stuart that we can realize the attitude and temper of the Scottish Sovereign at the moment when the death of Elizabeth called him to the English throne. He came flushed with a triumph over Calvinism and democracy, but embittered by the humiliations he had endured from them, and dreading them as the deadly enemies of his crown. Raised

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at last to a greatness of which he had hardly dreamed, he was little likely to yield to a pressure, whether religious or political, against which in his hour of weakness he had fought so hard. Hopes of ecclesiastical change found no echo in a King whose ears were still thrilling with the defiance of Melville and his fellow-ministers, and who among all the charms that England presented to him saw none so attractive as its ordered and obedient Church, its synods that met but at the royal will, its courts that carried out the royal ordinances, its bishops that held themselves to be royal officers. Nor were the hopes of political progress likely to meet with a warmer welcome. Politics with a Stuart meant simply a long struggle for the exaltation of the crown. It was a struggle where success had been won not by a reverence for law or a people's support, but by sheer personal energy, by a blind faith in monarchy and the rights of monarchy, by an unscrupulous use of every weapon which a King possessed. Craft had been met by craft, violence by violence. Justice had been degraded into a weapon in the royal hand. The sacredness of law had disappeared in a strife where all seemed lawful for the preservation of the crown. By means such as these feudalism had been humbled and the long strife with the baronage brought at last to a close. Strife with the people had yet to be waged. But in whatever forms it might present itself, whether in his new land or his old, it would be waged by James as by his successors in the same temper and with the same belief, a belief that the welfare of the nation lay in the unchecked supremacy of the crown, and a temper that held all means lawful for the establishment of such a supremacy.

CHAPTER III.

THE BREAK WITH THE PARLIAMENT.

1603—1611.

James the First.

On the sixth of May, 1603, after a stately progress through his new dominions, King James entered London. In outer appearance no sovereign could have jarred more utterly against the conception of an English ruler which had grown up under Plantagenet or Tudor. His big head, his slobbering tongue, his quilted clothes, his rickety legs stood out in as grotesque a contrast with all that men recalled of Henry or Elizabeth as his gabble and rhodomontade, his want of personal dignity, his buffoonery, his coarseness of speech, his pedantry, his personal cowardice. Under this ridiculous exterior indeed lay no small amount of moral courage and of intellectual ability. James was a ripe scholar, with a considerable fund of shrewdness, of mother-wit, and ready repartee. His canny humour lights up the political and theological controversies of the time with quaint incisive phrases, with puns and epigrams and touches of irony which still retain their savour. His reading, especially in theological matters, was extensive; and he was already a voluminous author on subjects which ranged from predestination to tobacco. But his shrewdness and learning only left him, in the phrase of Henry the Fourth of France, "the wisest fool in Christendom." He had in fact the temper of a pedant, a pedant's conceit, a pedant's love of theories, and a pedant's inability to bring his theories into any relation with actual facts. It

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was this fatal defect that marred his political abilities. As a statesman he had shown no little capacity in his smaller realm; his cool humour and good temper had held even Melville at bay; he had known how to wait and how to strike; and his patience and boldness had been rewarded with a fair success. He had studied foreign affairs as busily as he had studied Scotch affairs; and of the temper and plans of foreign courts he probably possessed a greater knowledge than any Englishman save Robert Cecil. But what he never possessed, and what he never could gain, was any sort of knowledge of England or Englishmen. He came to his new home a Scotchman, a foreigner, strange to the life, the thoughts, the traditions of the English people. And he remained strange to them to the last. A younger man might have insensibly imbibed the temper of the men about him. A man of genius would have flung himself into the new world of thought and feeling and made it his own. But James was neither young nor a man of genius. He was already in middle age when he crossed the Border; and his cleverness and his conceit alike blinded him to the need of any adjustment of his conclusions or his prejudices to the facts which fronted him.

The foreign rule.

It was this estrangement from the world of thought and feeling about them which gave its peculiar colour to the rule of the Stuarts. It was not the first time that England had submitted to foreign kings. But it was the first time that England experienced a foreign rule. Foreign notions of religion, foreign maxims of state, foreign conceptions of the attitude of the people or the nobles towards the Crown, foreign notions of the relation of the Crown to the people, formed the policy of James as of his successors. For the Stuarts remained foreigners to the last. Their line filled the English throne for more than eighty years; but like the Bourbons they forgot nothing and they learned nothing. To all influences indeed save English influences they were accessible enough. As

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James was steeped in the traditions of Scotland, so Charles the First was open to the traditions of Spain. The second Charles and the second James reflected in very different ways the temper of France. But what no Stuart seemed able to imbibe or to reflect was the temper of England. The strange medley of contradictory qualities which blended in the English character, its love of liberty and its love of order, its prejudice and open-mindedness, its religious enthusiasm and its cool good sense, remained alike unintelligible to them. And as they failed to understand England, so in many ways England failed to understand them. It underrated their ability, nor did it do justice to their aims. Its insular temper found no hold on a policy which was far more European than insular. Its practical sense recoiled from the unpractical cleverness that, while it seldom said a foolish thing, yet never did a wise one.

The new policy.

From the first this severance between English feeling and the feeling of the king was sharply marked. If war and taxation had dimmed the popularity of Elizabeth in her later years, England had still a reverence for the Queen who had made her great. But James was hardly over the border when he was heard expressing his scorn of the character and statecraft of his predecessor. Her policy, whether at home or abroad, he came resolved to undo. Men who had fought side by side with Dutchmen and Huguenot against Spaniard and Leaguer heard angrily that the new King was seeking for peace with Spain, that he was negotiating with the Papacy, while he met the advances of France with a marked coolness, and denounced the Hollanders as rebels against their king. It was with scarcely less anger that they saw the stern system of repression which had prevailed through the close of Elizabeth's reign relaxed in favour of the Catholics, and recusants released from the payments of fines. It was clear that both at home and abroad James purposed to withdraw from that struggle with Catholicism which the hotter

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Protestants looked upon as a battle for God. What the King really aimed at was the security of his throne. The Catholics alone questioned his title; and a formal excommunication by Rome would have roused them to dispute his accession. James had averted this danger by intrigues both with the Papal Court and the English Catholics during the later years of Elizabeth; and his vague assurances had mystified the one and prevented the others from acting. The disappointment of the Catholics when no change followed on the King's accession found vent in a wild plot for the seizure of his person, devised by a priest named Watson; and the alarm this created quickened James to a redemption of his pledges. In July, 1603, the leading Catholics were called before the Council and assured that the fines for recusancy would no longer be exacted; while an attempt was made to open a negotiation with Rome and to procure the support of the Pope for the new government. But the real strength of the Catholic party lay in the chance of aid from Spain. So long as the war continued they would look to Spain for succour, and the influence of Spain would be exerted to keep them in antagonism to the Crown. Nor was this the only ground for a cessation of hostilities. The temper of James was peaceful; the royal treasury was exhausted; and the continuance of the war necessitated a close connexion with the Calvinistic and republican Hollanders. At the same time therefore that the Catholics were assured of a relaxation of the penal laws, negotiations for peace were opened with Spain.

James and the Puritans.

However justifiable such steps might be, it was certain that they would rouse alarm and discontent among the sterner Protestants. For a time however it seemed as if concessions on one side were to be balanced by concessions on the other, as if the tolerance which had been granted to the Catholic would be extended to the Puritan. James had hardly crossed the border when he was met by what was termed the Millenary Petition,

from a belief that it was signed by a thousand of the English clergy. It really received the assent of some eight hundred, or of about a tenth of the clergy of the realm. The petitioners asked for no change in the government or organization of the Church, but for a reform of its courts, the removal of superstitious usages from the Book of Common Prayer, the disuse of lessons from the apocryphal books of Scripture, a more rigorous observance of Sundays, and the provision and training of ministers who could preach to the people. Concessions on these points would as yet have satisfied the bulk of the Puritans; and for a while it seemed as if concession was purposed. The King not only received the petition, but promised a conference of bishops and divines in which it should be discussed. Ten months however were suffered to pass before the pledge was redeemed; and a fierce protest from the University of Oxford in the interval gave little promise of a peaceful settlement. The university denounced the Puritan demands as preludes of a Presbyterian system in which the clergy would "have power to bind their king in chains and their prince in links of iron, that is (in their learning) to censure him, to enjoin him penance, to excommunicate him, yea—in case they see cause—to proceed against him as a tyrant."

Hampton Court conference.

The warning was hardly needed by James. The voice of Melville was still in his ears when he summoned four Puritan ministers to meet the Archbishop and eight of his suffragans at Hampton Court in January 1604. From the first he showed no purpose of discussing the grievances alleged in the petition. He revelled in the opportunity for a display of his theological reading; but he viewed the Puritan demands in a purely political light. He charged the petitioners with aiming at a Scottish presbytery, "where Jack and Tom and Will and Dick shall meet, and at their pleasure censure me and my Council and all their proceedings. Stay," he went on with amusing vehemence, "stay, I pray you, for one seven years before you demand

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that from me, and if you find me pursy and fat and my windpipe stuffed, I will perhaps hearken to you, for let that government be once up, and I am sure I shall be kept in health." No words could have better shown the new King's unconsciousness that he had passed into a land where parliaments were realities, and where the "censure" of king and council was a national tradition. But neither his theology nor his politics met with any protest from the prelates about him. On the contrary, the bishops declared that the insults James showered on their opponents were inspired by the Holy Ghost. The Puritans however still ventured to question his infallibility, and the King broke up the conference with a threat which disclosed the policy of the Crown. "I will make them conform," he said of the remonstrants, "or I will harry them out of the land!"

The Parliament of 1604.

It is only when we recall the temper of England at the time that we can understand the profound emotion which was roused by threats such as these. Three months after the conference at Hampton Court the members were gathering to the first parliament of the new reign; and the Parliament of 1604 met in another mood from that of any parliament which had met for a hundred years. Under the Tudors the Houses had more than once at great crises in our history withstood the policy of the Crown. But in the main that policy had been their own; and it was the sense of this oneness in aim which had averted any final collision even in the strife with Elizabeth. But this trust in the unity of the nation and the Crown was now roughly shaken. The squires and merchants who thronged the benches at Westminster listened with coldness and suspicion to the self-confident assurances of the King. "I bring you," said James, "two gifts, one peace with foreign nations, the other union with Scotland;" and a project was laid before them for a union of the two kingdoms under the name of Great Britian. "By what laws," asked Bacon, "shall

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this Britain be governed?" Great in fact as were the advantages of such a scheme, the House showed its sense of the political difficulties involved in it by referring it to a commission. James in turn showed his resentment by passing over the attempts made to commute for a fixed sum the oppressive rights of Purveyance and Wardship. But what the House was really set upon was religious reform; and the first step of the Commons had been the naming of a committee to frame bills for the redress of the more crying ecclesiastical grievances. The influence of the Crown secured the rejection of these bills by the Lords; and the irritation of the Lower House showed itself in an outspoken address to the King. The Parliament, it said, had come together in a spirit of peace. "Our desires were of peace only, and our device of unity." Their aim had been to put an end to the long-standing dissension among the ministers, and to preserve uniformity by the abandonment of "a few ceremonies of small importance," by the redress of some ecclesiastical abuses, and by the establishment of an efficient training for a preaching clergy. If they had waived their right to deal with these matters during the old age of Elizabeth, they asserted it now. "Let your Majesty be pleased to receive public information from your Commons in parliament, as well of the abuses in the Church as in the civil state and government." Words yet bolder, and which sound like a prelude to the Petition of Right, met the claim of absolutism which was so frequently on the new king's lips. "Your majesty would be misinformed," said the address, "if any man should deliver that the Kings of England have any absolute power in themselves, either to alter religion or to make any laws concerning the same, otherwise than as in temporal causes, by consent of Parliament."

The Canons of 1604.

The address was met by a petulant scolding, and as the Commons met coldly the king's request for a subsidy the Houses were adjourned. James at once assumed the title to which Parliament had deferred its assent, of King of Great

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Britain; while the support of the Crown emboldened the bishops to a fresh defiance of the Puritan pressure. The act of Elizabeth which gave parliamentary sanction to the Thirty-nine Articles compelled ministers to subscribe only to those which concerned the faith and the sacraments, and thus implicitly refused to compel their signatures to the articles which related to points of discipline and Church government. The compromise had been observed from 1571 till now; but the Convocation of 1604 by its canons required the subscription of the clergy to the articles touching rites and ceremonies. The King showed his approval of this step by raising its prime mover, Bancroft, to the vacant see of Canterbury; and Bancroft added to the demand of subscription a requirement of rigid conformity with the rubrics on the part of all beneficed clergymen. In the spring of 1605 three hundred of the Puritan clergy were driven from their livings for a refusal to comply with these demands.

Fresh breach with the Catholics.

If James had come to his new throne with dreams of conciliation and of a greater unity among his subjects, his dream was to be speedily dispelled. At the moment when the persecution of Bancroft announced a final breach between the Crown and the Puritans, a revival of the old rigour made a fresh breach between the Crown and the Catholics. In remitting the fines for recusancy James had never purposed to suffer any revival of Catholicism; and in the opening of 1604 a proclamation which bade all Jesuits and seminary priests depart from the land proved that on its political side the Elizabethan policy was still adhered to. But the effect of the remission of fines was at once to swell the numbers of avowed Catholics. In the diocese of Chester the number of recusants increased by a thousand. Rumours of Catholic conversions spread a panic which showed itself in an act of the Parliament of 1604 confirming the statutes of Elizabeth; and to this James gave his assent. He promised indeed that the statute should remain inopera-

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tive; but rumours of his own conversion, which sprang from his secret negotiation with Rome, so angered the King that in the spring of 1605 he bade the judges put it in force, while the fines for recusancy were levied more strictly than before. The disappointment of their hopes, the quick breach of the pledges so solemnly given to them, drove the Catholics to despair. They gave fresh life to a conspiracy which a small knot of bigots had been fruitlessly striving to bring to an issue since the King's accession. Catesby, a Catholic zealot who had taken part in the rising of Essex, had busied himself during the last years of Elizabeth in preparing for a revolt at the Queen's death, and in seeking for his project the aid of Spain. He was joined in his plans by two fellow-zealots, Winter and Wright; but the scheme was still unripe when James peaceably mounted the throne; and for the moment his pledge of toleration put an end to it. But the zeal of the plotters was revived by the banishment of the priests; and the conspiracy at last took the form of a plan for blowing up both Houses of Parliament and profiting by the terror caused by such a stroke. In Flanders Catesby found a new assistant in his schemes, Guido Fawkes, an Englishman who was serving in the army of the Archduke; and on his return to England he was joined by Thomas Percy, a cousin of the Earl of Northumberland and a pensioner of the king's guard. In May, 1604, the little group hired a tenement near the Parliament house, and set themselves to dig a mine beneath its walls.

The Gunpowder Plot.

As yet however they stood alone. The bulk of the Catholics were content with the relaxation of the penal laws; and in the absence of any aid the plotters were forced to suspend their work. It was not till the sudden change in the royal policy that their hopes revived. But with the renewal of persecution Catesby at once bestirred himself; and at the close of 1604 the lucky discovery of a cellar beneath the Parliament House facilitated the execution of this plan. Barrels of gunpowder were placed

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in the cellar, and the little group waited patiently for the fifth of November, 1605, when the Houses were again summoned to assemble. In the interval their plans widened into a formidable conspiracy. It was arranged that on the destruction of the King and the Parliament the Catholics should rise, seize the young princes, use the general panic to make themselves masters of the realm, and call for aid from the Spaniards in Flanders. With this view Catholics of greater fortune, such as Sir Everard Digby and Francis Tresham, were admitted to Catesby's confidence, and supplied money for the larger projects he designed. Arms were bought in Flanders, horses were held in readiness, a meeting of Catholic gentlemen was brought about under show of a hunting party to serve as the beginning of a rising. Wonderful as was the secrecy with which the plot was concealed, the cowardice of Tresham at the last moment gave a clue to it by a letter to Lord Monteagle, his relative, which warned him to absent himself from the Parliament on the fatal day; and further information brought about the discovery of the cellar and of Guido Fawkes, who was charged with its custody. The hunting party broke up in despair, the conspirators, chased from county to county, were either killed or sent to the block; and Garnet, the Provincial of the English Jesuits, was brought to trial and executed. Though he had shrunk from all part in the plot, its existence had been made known to him by another Jesuit, Greenway; and horror-stricken as he represented himself to have been he had kept the secret and left the Parliament to its doom.

The Impositions.

The failure of such a plot necessarily gives strength to a government; and for the moment the Parliament was drawn closer to the King by the deliverance from a common peril. When the Houses again met in 1606 they listened in a different temper to the demand for a subsidy. The needs of the Treasury indeed were great. Elizabeth had left behind her a war expenditure, and a debt of

four hundred thousand pounds. The first ceased with the peace, but the debt remained; and the prodigality of James was fast raising the charges of the Crown in time of peace to as high a level as they had reached under his predecessor in time of war. The Commons voted a sum which was large enough to meet the royal debt. The fixed charges of the Crown they held should be met by its ordinary revenues; but James had no mind to bring his expenditure down to the level of Elizabeth's. The growth of English commerce offered a means of recruiting his treasury which seemed to lie within the limits of customary law; and of this he availed himself. The right of the Crown to levy impositions on exports and imports other than those of wool, leather, and tin, had been the last financial prerogative for which the Edwards had struggled. They had been forced indeed to abandon it; but the tradition of such a right lingered on at the royal council-board; and under the Tudors the practice had been to some slight extent revived. A duty on imports had been imposed in one or two instances by Mary, and this impost had been extended by Elizabeth to currants and wine. These instances however were too trivial and exceptional to break in upon the general usage; but a more dangerous precedent had been growing up in the duties which the great trading companies, such as those to the Levant and to the Indies, were allowed to exact from merchants, in exchange—as was held—for the protection they afforded them in far-off and dangerous seas. The Levant Company was now dissolved, and James seized on the duties it had levied as lapsing naturally to the Crown.

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Bates's case.

The Parliament at once protested against these impositions; but the prospect of a fresh struggle with the Commons told less with the King than the prospect of a revenue which might free him from dependance on the Commons altogether. His fanatical belief in the rights and power of the Crown hindered all sober judgement of such a question. James cared quite as much

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to assert his absolute authority as to fill his treasury. In the course of 1606 therefore the case of a Levant merchant called Bates, who refused to pay the imposition, was brought before the Exchequer Chamber. The judgement of the court justified the King's confidence in his claim. It went far beyond the original bounds of the case itself, or the right of the Crown to levy on the ground of protection the dues which had been levied on that ground by the leading companies. It asserted the King's right to levy what customs duties he would. "All customs," said the judges, "are the effects of foreign commerce; but all affairs of commerce and treaties with foreign nations belong to the King's absolute power. He therefore who has power over the cause has power over the effect." The importance of such a decision could hardly be overrated. English commerce was growing fast. English merchants were fighting their way to the Spice Islands, and establishing settlements in the dominions of the Mogul. The judgement gave James a revenue which was certain to grow rapidly, and whose growth would go far to free the Crown from any need of resorting for supplies to Parliament.

The Post-Nati.

But no immediate step was taken to give effect to the judgement; and the Commons contented themselves with a protest against impositions at the close of the session of 1606. When they reassembled in the following year their attention was absorbed by the revival of the questions which sprang from the new relations of Scotland to England through their common king. There was now no question of a national union. The commission to which the whole matter had been referred had reported in favour of the abolition of hostile laws, the establishment of a general free trade between the two kingdoms, and the naturalization as Englishmen of all living Scotchmen who had been born before the King's accession to the English throne. The judges had already given their opinion that all born after it were naturalized Englishmen by force of their allegiance to a sovereign who had become King of England. The

constitutional danger of such a theory was easily seen. Had the marriage of Philip and Mary produced a son, every Spaniard and every Fleming would under it have counted as Englishmen, and England would have been absorbed in the mass of the Spanish monarchy. The opinion of the judges in fact implied that nationality hung not on the existence of the nation itself, but on its relation to a king. It was to escape from such a theory that the Commons asked that the question should be waived, and offered on that condition to naturalize all Scotchmen whatever by statute. But James would not assent. To him the assertion of a right inherent in the Crown was far dearer than a peaceful settlement of the matter; the bills for free trade were dropped; and on the adjournment of the Houses a case was brought before the Exchequer Chamber; and the naturalization of the "Post-nati," as Scots born after the King's accession were styled, established by a formal judgement.

James and Scotland.

James had won a victory for his prerogative; but he had won it at the cost of Scotland. To the smaller and poorer kingdom the removal of all obstacles to her commerce with England would have been an inestimable gain. The intercourse which it would have necessitated could hardly have failed in time to bring about a more perfect union. But as the King's reign drew on, the union of the two realms seemed more distant than ever. Bacon's shrewd question, "under which laws is this Britain to be governed," took fresh meaning as men saw James asserting in Scotland an all but absolute authority, and breaking down the one constitutional check which had hitherto hampered him. The energy which he had shown in his earlier combat with the democratic forces embodied in the Kirk was not likely to slacken on his accession to the southern throne. It was in the General Assembly that the new force of public opinion took legislative and administrative form; and even before he crossed the border James had succeeded in asserting a right to convene and

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be personally present at the proceedings of the General Assembly. But once King of England he could venture on heavier blows. In spite of his assent to an act legalizing its annual convention James hindered any meeting of the General Assembly for five successive years by repeated prorogations. The protests of the clergy were roughly met. When nineteen ministers appeared in 1605 at Aberdeen and, in defiance of the prorogation, constituted themselves an Assembly, they were called before the Council, and on refusal to own its jurisdiction banished as traitors from the realm. Of the leaders who remained the boldest were summoned in 1606 with Andrew Melville to confer with the king in England on his projects of change. On their refusal to betray the freedom of the Church they were committed to prison; and an epigram which Melville wrote on the usages of the English communion was seized on as a ground for bringing him before the English Privy Council with Bancroft at its head. But the insolence of the Primate fell on ears less patient than those of the Puritans he had insulted at Hampton Court. As he stood at the council table Melville seized the Archbishop by the sleeves of his rochet, and shaking them in his manner, called them Popish rags and marks of the beast. He was sent to the Tower, and released after some years of imprisonment only to go into exile.

Submission of the Kirk.

The trial of Scotchmen before a foreign court, the imprisonment of Scotchmen in foreign prisons, were steps that showed the powerlessness of James to grasp the first principles of law; but they were effective for the purpose at which he aimed. They struck terror into the Scotch ministers. Their one weapon lay in the enthusiasm of the people; but, strongly as Scotch enthusiasm might tell on a king at Edinburgh it was powerless over a king at London. The time had come when James might pass on from merely silencing the General Assembly to the use of it in the enslavement of the Church. Successful as

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he had been in gagging the pulpits and silencing the Assembly he had been as yet less successful in his efforts to revive the power of the crown over the Church by a restoration of Episcopacy. He had nominated a few bishops, and had won back for them their old places in Parliament; but his bishops remained purely secular nobles, unrecognized in their spiritual capacity by the Church, and without any ecclesiastical jurisdiction. It was in vain that James had striven to bring Melville and his fellows to any recognition of prelacy. But with their banishment and imprisonment the field was clear for more vigorous action. Deprived of their leaders, threatened with bonds and exile, deserted by the nobles, ill supported as yet by the mass of the people, to whom the real nature of their struggle was unknown, the Scotch ministers bent at last before the pressure of the Crown. They still shrank indeed from any formal acceptance of episcopacy; but they allowed the bishops to act as perpetual moderators or presidents in the synods of their presbyteries.

Restoration of Scotch Episcopacy.

With such moderators the General Assembly might be suffered to meet. Their influence in fact secured the return of royal nominees to Assemblies which met in 1608 and in 1610; and in the second of these assemblies episcopacy was at last formally recognized by the Scottish Church. The bishops were owned as permanent heads of each provincial synod; the power of ordination was committed to them; the ecclesiastical sentences pronounced by synod or presbytery were henceforth to be submitted for their approval. The new organization of the Church was at once carried out. The vacant sees were filled. Two archbishops were created at St. Andrew's and Glasgow, and set at the head of Courts of High Commission for their respective provinces; while three of the prelates were sent to receive consecration in England, and on their return communicated it to their fellow-bishops. With such a measure of success James was fairly content. The prelacy he had

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revived fell far short of English episcopacy; to the eyes of religious dogmatists such as Laud indeed it seemed little better than the presbyterianism it superseded. But the aim of James was political rather than religious. He had no dislike for presbyterianism as a system of Church-government; what he dreaded was the popular force to which it gave form in its synods and assemblies, and which, in the guise of ecclesiastical independence, was lifting the nation into equality with the Crown. In seizing on the control of the Church through his organized prelacy James held himself to have seized the control of the forces which acted through the Church, and to have won back that mastery of his realm which the Reformation had reft from the Scottish kings.

England and the Prerogative.

What he had really done was to commit the Scotch Crown to a lasting struggle with the religious impulses of the Scottish people. The cause of episcopacy was ruined by his triumph. Belief in bishops ceased to be possible for a Scotchman when bishops were forced on Scotland as mere tools of the royal will. Presbyterianism on the other hand became identified with patriotism. It was no longer an ecclesiastical system; it was the guise under which national freedom and even national existence were to struggle against an arbitrary rule,—against a rule which grew more and more the rule of a foreign king. Nor was the sight of the royal triumph lost on the southern realm. England had no love for presbyters or hatred for bishops; but as she saw the last check on the royal authority broken down over the border she looked the more jealously at the effort which James was making to break down such checks at home. Under Elizabeth proclamations had been sparingly used, and for the most part only to enforce what was already the law. Not only was their number multiplied under James, but their character was changed. They created new offences, imposed new penalties, and directed offenders to be brought before courts which had no legal jurisdiction over them. To narrow indeed the sphere of the common

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law seemed the special aim of the royal policy; the four counties of the western border had been severed from the rest of England and placed under the jurisdiction of the President and Council of Wales, a court whose constitution and procedure rested on the sheer will of the Crown. The province of the spiritual courts was as busily enlarged. It was in vain that the judges, spurred no doubt by the old jealousy between civil and ecclesiastical lawyers, entertained appeals against the High Commission, and strove by a series of decisions to set bounds to its limitless claims of jurisdiction or to restrict its powers of imprisonment to cases of schism and heresy. The judges were powerless against the Crown; and James was vehement in his support of courts which were closely bound up with his own prerogative. What work the courts spiritual might be counted on to do, if the King had his way, was plain from the announcement of a civilian named Cowell that "the King is above law by his absolute power," and that "notwithstanding his oath he may alter and suspend any particular law that seemeth hurtful to the public estate."

The claims of the King.

Cowell's book was suppressed on a remonstrance of the House of Commons; but the party of passive obedience grew fast. Even before his accession to the English throne James had formulated his theory of rule in a work on *The True Law of Free Monarchy*, and announced that "although a good king will frame his actions to be according to law, yet he is not bound thereto, but of his own will and for example giving to his subjects." With the Tudor statesmen who used the phrase, "an absolute king" or "an absolute monarchy" meant a sovereign or rule complete in themselves and independent of all foreign or Papal interference. James chose to regard the words as implying the freedom of the monarch from all control by law or from responsibility to anything but his own royal will. The King's theory was already a system of government; it was soon to become a doctrine which bishops preached from the pulpit, and for which brave men laid their heads

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on the block. The Church was quick to adopt its sovereign's discovery. Some three years after his accession Convocation in its book of Canons denounced as a fatal error the assertion that "all civil power, jurisdiction, and authority were first derived from the people and disordered multitude, or either is originally still in them, or else is deduced by their consent naturally from them; and is not God's ordinance originally descending from him and depending upon him." In strict accordance with the royal theory these doctors declared sovereignty in its origin to be the prerogative of birthright, and inculcated passive obedience to the Crown as a religious obligation. The doctrine of passive obedience was soon taught in the schools. A few years before the King's death the University of Oxford decreed solemnly that "it was in no case lawful for subjects to make use of force against their princes, or to appear offensively or defensively in the field against them." But what gave most force to such teaching were the reiterated expressions of James himself. If the King's "arrogant speeches" woke resentment in the Parliaments to which they were addressed, they created by sheer force of repetition a certain amount of belief in the arbitrary power they challenged for the Crown. One sentence from a speech delivered in the Star Chamber may serve as an instance of their tone. "As it is atheism and blasphemy to dispute what God can do, so," said James, "it is presumption, and a high contempt in a subject to dispute what a king can do, or to say that a king cannot do this or that."

Distrust of the King.

"If the practice follow the positions," commented a thoughtful observer on words such as these, "we are not likely to leave to our successors the freedom we received from our forefathers." Their worst effect was in changing the whole attitude of the nation towards the Crown. England had trusted the Tudors, it distrusted the Stuarts. The mood indeed both of King and people had grown to be a mood of jealousy, of suspicion, which, inevitable

as it was, often did injustice to the purpose of both. King James looked on the squires and merchants of the House of Commons as his Stuart predecessors had looked on the Scotch baronage. He regarded their discussions, their protests, their delays, not as the natural hesitation of men called suddenly, and with only half knowledge, to the settlement of great and complex questions, but as proofs of a conspiracy to fetter and impede the action of the Crown. The Commons on the other hand listened to the King's hectoring speeches, not as the chance talk of a clever and garrulous theorist, but as proofs of a settled purpose to change the character of the monarchy. In a word, James had succeeded in some seven years of rule in breaking utterly down that mutual understanding between the Crown and its subjects on which all government, save a sheer despotism, must necessarily rest.

Robert Cecil.

It was this mutual distrust which brought about the final breach between the Parliament and the King. The question of the impositions had seemed for a while to have been waived. The Commons had contented themselves with a protest against their levy. James had for two years hesitated in acting on the judgement which asserted his right to levy them. But the needs of the treasury became too great to admit of further hesitation, and in 1608 a royal proclamation imposed customs duties on many articles of import and export. The new duties came in fast; but unluckily the royal debt grew faster. To a king fresh from the penniless exchequer of Holyrood the wealth of England seemed boundless; money was lavished on court-feasts and favourites; and with each year the expenditure of James reached a higher level. It was in vain that Robert Cecil took the treasury into his own hands, and strove to revive the frugal traditions of Elizabeth. The King's prodigality undid his minister's work; and in 1610 Cecil was forced to announce to his master that the annual revenue of the Crown must be supplemented by fresh grants from Parliament. The scheme which Cecil laid before the King and

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the Commons is of great importance as the last effort of that Tudor policy which had so long hindered an outbreak of strife between the nation and the Crown. Differ as the Tudors might from one another, they were alike in their keen sense of national feeling and in their craving to carry it along with them. Masterful as Henry or Elizabeth might be, what they "prized most dearly," as the Queen confessed, was "the love and goodwill of their subjects." They prized it because they knew the force it gave them. And Cecil knew it too. He had grown up among the traditions of the Tudor rule. He had been trained by his father in the system of Elizabeth. Whether as a minister of the Queen, or as a minister of her successor, he had striven to carry that system into effect. His conviction of the supremacy of the Crown was as strong as that of James himself, but it was tempered by as strong a conviction of the need of the national good-will. He had seen what weight the passionate enthusiasm that gathered round Elizabeth gave to her policy both at home and abroad; and he saw that a time was drawing near when the same weight would be needed by the policy of the Crown.

Protestantism in Germany.

Slowly but steadily the clouds of religious strife were gathering over central Europe. From such a strife, should it once break out in war, England could not hold aloof unless the tradition of its policy was wholly set aside. And so long as Cecil lived, whatever change might take place at home, in all foreign affairs the Elizabethan policy was mainly adhered to. Peace indeed was made with Spain; but a close alliance with the United Provinces, and a more guarded alliance with France, held the ambition of Spain in check almost as effectually as war. The peace in fact set England free to provide against dangers which threatened to become greater than those from Spanish aggression in the Netherlands. Wearily as war in that quarter might drag on, it was clear that the Dutchmen could hold their own, and that all that Spain and Catholicism could hope

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for was to save the rest of the Low Countries from their grasp. But no sooner was danger from the Spanish branch of the House of Austria at an end than Protestantism had to guard itself against its German branch. The vast possessions of Charles the Fifth had been parted between his brother and his son. While Philip took Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, and the Indies, Ferdinand took the German dominions, the hereditary Duchy of Austria, the Suabian lands, Tyrol, Styria, Carinthia, Carniola. Marriage and fortune brought to the German branch the dependent states of Hungary, Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia; and it had succeeded in retaining the Imperial crown. The wisdom and moderation of Ferdinand and his successor secured tranquillity for Germany through some fifty years. They were faithful to the Peace of Passau, which had been wrested by Maurice of Saxony from Charles the Fifth, and which secured both Protestants and Catholics in the rights and possessions which they held at the moment it was made. Their temper was tolerant; and they looked on quietly while Protestantism spread over Southern Germany and solved all doubtful questions which arose from the treaty in its own favour. The Peace had provided that all church land already secularized should remain so; of the later secularization of other church land it said nothing. It provided that states already Protestant should abide so, but it said nothing of the right of other states to declare themselves Protestant. Doubt however was set aside by religious zeal; new states became Lutheran, and eight great bishoprics of the north were secularized. Meanwhile the new faith was spreading fast over the dominions of the House of Austria. The nobles of their very Duchy embraced it: Moravia, Silesia, Hungary all but wholly abandoned Catholicism. Through the earlier reign of Elizabeth it seemed as if by a peaceful progress of conversion Germany was about to become Protestant.

The Catholic reaction.

German Catholicism was saved by the Catholic revival and by the energy of the Jesuits. It was saved perhaps

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as much by the strife which broke out in the heart of German Protestantism between Lutheran and Calvinist. But the Catholic zealots were far from resting content with having checked the advance of their opponents. They longed to undo their work. They did not question the Treaty of Passau or the settlement made by it; but they disputed the Protestant interpretation of its silences; they called for the restoration to Catholicism of all church lands secularized, of all states converted from the older faith, since its conclusion. Their new attitude woke little terror in the Lutheran states. The treaty secured their rights, and their position in one unbroken mass stretching across Northern Germany seemed to secure them from Catholic attack. But the Calvinistic states, Hesse, Baden, and the Palatinate, felt none of this security. If the treaty were strictly construed it gave them no right of existence, for Calvinism had arisen since the treaty was signed. Their position too was a hazardous one. They lay girt in on all sides but one by Catholic territories, here by the bishops of the Rhineland with the Spaniards in Franche Comté and the Netherlands to back them, there by Bavaria and by the bishoprics of the Main. Foes such as these indeed the Calvinists could fairly have faced; but behind them lay the House of Austria; and the influence of the Catholic revival was at last telling on the Austrian princes. In 1606 an attempt of the Emperor Rudolf to force Catholicism again on his people woke revolt in the Duchy; and though the troubles were allayed by his removal, his successor Matthias persevered though more quietly in the same anti-Protestant policy.

The Union and the League.

The accession of the House of Austria to the number of their foes created a panic among the Calvinistic states, and in 1608 they joined together in a Protestant Union with Christian of Anhalt at its head. But zeal was at once met by zeal; and the formation of the Union was answered by the formation of a Catholic League among the states about it under Maximilian, the Duke of Bavaria,

Both were ostensibly for defensive purposes: but the peace of Europe was at once shaken. Ambitious schemes woke up in every quarter. Spain saw the chance of securing a road along western Germany which would enable her to bring her whole force to bear on the rebels in the Low Countries. France on the other hand had recovered from the exhaustion of her own religious wars, and was eager to take up again the policy pursued by Francis the First and his son, of weakening and despoiling Germany by feeding and using religious strife across the Rhine. In 1610 a quarrel over Cleves afforded a chance for her intervention, and it was only an assassin's dagger that prevented Henry the Fourth from doing that which Richelieu was to do. England alone could hinder a second outbreak of the Wars of Religion; but the first step in such a policy must be a reconciliation between King and Parliament. James might hector about the might of the Crown, but he had no power of acting with effect abroad save through the national good will. Without troops and without supplies, his threat of war would be ridiculous; and without the backing of such a threat Cecil knew well that mediation would be a mere delusion. Whether for the conduct of affairs at home or abroad it was needful to bring the widening quarrel between the King and the Parliament to a close; and it was with a settled purpose of reconciliation that Cecil brought James to call the Houses again together in 1610.

The Great Contract.

He never dreamed of conciliating the Commons by yielding unconditionally to their demands. Cecil looked on the right to levy impositions as legally established; and the Tudor sovereigns had been as keen as James himself in seizing on any rights that the law could be made to give them. But as a practical statesman he saw that the right could only be exercized to the profit of the Crown if it was exercized with the good-will of the people. To win that good-will it was necessary to put the impositions on a legal footing; while for the conduct of affairs it was necessary to raise permanently the revenue

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of the Crown. On the Tudor theory of politics these were concessions made by the nation to the King; and it was the Tudor practise to buy such concessions by counter-concessions made by the King to the nation. Materials for such a bargain existed in the feudal rights of the Crown, above all those of marriage and wardship, which were harassing to the people while they brought little profit to the exchequer. The Commons had more than once prayed for some commutation of these rights, and Cecil seized on their prayer as the ground of an accommodation. He proposed that James should waive his feudal rights, that he should submit to the sanction by Parliament of the impositions already levied, and that he should bind himself to levy no more by his own prerogative, on condition that the Commons assented to this arrangement, discharged the royal debt, and raised the royal revenue by a sum of two hundred thousand a year.

Attitude of the Commons.

Such was the "great contract" with which Cecil met the Houses when they once more assembled in 1610. It was a bargain which the Commons must have been strongly tempted to accept; for heavy as were its terms it averted the great danger of arbitrary taxation, and again brought the monarchy into constitutional relations with Parliament. What hindered their acceptance of it was their suspicion of James. Purveyance and the Impositions were far from being the only grievance against which they came to protest; they had to complain of the increase of proclamations, the establishment of new and arbitrary courts of law, the encroachments of the spiritual jurisdiction; and consent to such a bargain, if it remedied two evils, would cut off all chance of redressing the rest. Were the treasury once full, no means remained of bringing the Crown to listen to their protest against the abuses of the Church, the silencing of godly ministers, the maintenance of pluralities and non-residence, the want of due training for the clergy. Nor had the Commons any mind to pass in silence over the illegalities of the preceding years. Whether they were to

give legal sanction to the impositions or no, they were resolute to protest against their levy without sanction of law. James forbade them to enter on the subject, but their remonstrance was none the less vigorous. "Finding that your majesty, without advice or counsel of Parliament, hath lately in time of peace set both greater impositions and more in number than any of your noble ancestors did ever in time of war," they prayed, "that all impositions set without the assent of Parliament may be quite abolished and taken away," and that "a law be made to declare that all impositions set upon your people, their goods or merchandize, save only by common consent in Parliament, are and shall be void." As to Church grievances their demands were in the same spirit. They prayed that the deposed ministers might be suffered to preach, and that the jurisdiction of the High Commission should be regulated by statute; in other words, that ecclesiastical like financial matters should be taken out of the sphere of the prerogative and be owned as lying henceforth within the cognizance of Parliament.

Dissolution of the Parliament.

It was no doubt the last demand that roused above all the anger of the King. As to some of the grievances he was ready to make concessions. He had consulted the judges as to the legality of his proclamations, and the judges had pronounced them illegal. It never occurred to James to announce his withdrawal from a claim which he now knew to be wholly against law, and he kept the opinion of the judges secret; but it made him ready to include the grievance of proclamations in his bargain with the Commons, if they would grant a larger subsidy. The question of the court of Wales he treated in the same temper. But on the question of the Church, of Church reform, or of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, he would make no concession whatever. He had just wrought his triumph over the Scottish Kirk; and had succeeded, as he believed, in transferring the control of its spiritual life from the Scottish people to the Crown. He was not likely to

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consent to any reversal of such a process in England itself. The claim of the Commons had become at last a claim that England through its representatives in Parliament should have a part in the direction of its own religious affairs. Such a claim sprang logically from the very facts of the Reformation. It was by the joint action of the Crown and Parliament that the actual constitution of the English Church had been established; and it seemed hard to deny that the same joint action was operative for its after reform. But it was in vain that the Commons urged their claim. Elizabeth had done wisely in resisting it, for her task was to govern a half-Catholic England with a Puritan Parliament; and in spite of constitutional forms the Queen was a truer representative of national opinion in matters of religion than the House of Commons. In her later years all had changed; and the Commons who fronted her successor were as truly representative of the religious opinion of the realm as Elizabeth had been. But James saw no ground for changing the policy of the Crown. The control of the Church and through it of English religion lay within the sphere of his prerogative, and on this question he was resolute to make a stand. The Commons were as resolute as the King. The long and intricate bargaining came on both sides to an end; and in February, 1611, the first Parliament of James was dissolved.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FAVOURITES.

1611—1625.

England and the Crown.

THE dissolution of the first Stuart Parliament marks a stage in our constitutional history. With it the system of the Tudors came to an end. The oneness of aim which had carried nation and government alike through the storms of the Reformation no longer existed. On the contrary the aims of the nation and the aims of the government were now in open opposition. The demand of England was that all things in the realm, courts, taxes, prerogatives, should be sanctioned and bounded by law. The policy of the King was to reserve whatever he could within the control of his personal will. James in fact was claiming a more personal and exclusive direction of affairs than any English sovereign that had gone before him. England, on the other hand, was claiming a greater share in its own guidance than it had enjoyed since the Wars of the Roses. Nor were the claims on either side speculative or theoretical. Differences in the theory of government or on the relative jurisdiction of Church and State might have been left as of old to the closet and the pulpit. But the opposition between the Crown and the people had gathered itself round practical questions, and round questions that were of interest to all. Every man's conscience was touched by the question of religion. Every man's pocket was touched by the question of taxation. The strongest among human impulses, the passion of religious

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zeal and that of personal self-interest, nerved Englishmen to a struggle with the Crown. What gave the strife a yet more practical bearing was the fact that James had provided the national passion with a constitutional rallying-point. There was but one influence which could match the reverence which men felt for the Crown, and that was the reverence that men felt for the Parliament; nor had that reverence ever stood at a greater height than at the moment when James finally broke with the Houses. The dissolution of 1611 proclaimed to the whole people a breach between two powers which it had hitherto looked upon as one. Not only did it disperse to every corner of the realm a crowd of great landowners and great merchants who formed centres of local opposition to the royal system, but it carried to every shire and every borough the news that the Monarchy had broken with the Great Council of the realm.

James his own minister.

On Cecil his failure fell like a sentence of doom. Steeped as he was in the Tudor temper, he could not understand an age when the Tudor system had become impossible; the mood of the Commons and the mood of the King were alike unintelligible to him. He could see no ground for the failure of the Great Contract save that "God had not blessed it." But he had little time to wonder at the new forces which were rising about him, for only a year after the dissolution, in May, 1612, he died, killed by overwork. With him died the last check on the policy of James. So long as Cecil lived the Elizabethan tradition, weakened and broken as it might be, lived with him. In foreign affairs there was still the conviction that the Protestant states must not be abandoned in any fresh struggle with the House of Austria. In home affairs there was still the conviction that the national strength hung on the establishment of good-will between the nation and the Crown. But traditions such as these were no longer to hamper the policy of the King. To him Cecil's death seemed only to afford an opportunity for taking further

strides towards the establishment of a purely personal rule. For eight years James had borne with the check of a powerful minister. He was resolved now to have no real minister but himself. Cecil's amazing capacity for toil, as well as his greed of power, had already smoothed the way for such a step. The great statesman had made a political solitude about him. Of his colleagues some had been removed by death, some set aside by his jealousy. Ralegh lay in prison; Bacon could not find office under the Crown. And now that Cecil was removed, there was no minister whose character or capacity seemed to give him any right to fill his place. James could at last be his own minister. The treasury was put into commission. The post of secretary was left vacant, and it was announced that the King would be his own Secretary of State. Such an arrangement soon broke down, and the great posts of state were again filled with men of whose dependence James felt sure. But whoever might nominally hold these offices, from the moment of Cecil's death the actual direction of affairs was in the hands of the King.

The Council set aside

Another constitutional check remained in the royal Council. As the influence of Parliament died down during the Wars of the Roses, that of the Council took to some extent its place. Composed as it was not only of ministers of the Crown but of the higher nobles and hereditary officers of state, it served under Tudor as under Plantagenet as an efficient check on the arbitrary will of the sovereign. Even the despotic temper of Henry VIII. had had to reckon with his council; it had checked act after act of Mary; it played a great part in the reign of Elizabeth. In the administrative tradition indeed of the last hundred years the council had become all important to the Crown. It brought it in contact with public opinion, less efficiently, no doubt, but more constantly than the Parliament itself; it gave to its acts an imposing sanction and assured to them a powerful support; above all it provided a body which stood at every crisis between the nation

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and the monarchy, which broke the shock of any conflict, and which could stand forth as mediator, should conflict arise, without any loss of dignity on the part of the sovereign. But to the practical advantages or to the traditional weight of such a body James was utterly blind. His cleverness made him impatient of its discussions; his conceit made him impatient of its control; while the foreign traditions which he had brought with him from a foreign land saw in the great nobles who composed it nothing but a possible force which might overawe the Crown. One of his chief aims therefore had been to lessen the influence of the council. So long as Cecil lived this was impossible, for the practical as well as the conservative temper of Cecil would have shrunk from so violent a change. But he was no sooner dead than James hastened to carry out his plans. The lords of the council found themselves of less and less account. They were practically excluded from all part in the government; and the whole management of affairs passed into the hands of the King or of the dependent ministers who from this time became mere agents of the King's will.

The Favourites.

Such a personal rule as this, concentrating as it does the whole business of government in a single man, requires for its actual conduct the entire devotion of the ruler to public affairs. The work of Ferdinand of Aragon or of Frederick the Great was the work of galley-slaves. It was work which had broken down the strength of Wolsey, and which was to bow the iron frame of Oliver Cromwell. But James had no mind for work such as this. His intellect was quick, inventive, fruitful in device, eager to plan, and confident in the wisdom of its plans. But he had none of the quality which distinguishes intellectual power from mere cleverness, the capacity not only to plan, but to know what plans can actually be carried out, and by what means they can be carried out. Like all merely clever men, he looked down on the drudgery of details. The posts which he had held vacant were soon filled up; and

before many months were over James ceased to be his own Treasurer or his own Secretary of State. But he still claimed the absolute direction of all affairs; he was resolved to be his own chief minister. Even here however he felt the need of a more active and practical mood than his own for giving shape to the schemes with which his brain was fermenting; and he fell back as of old on the tradition of his house. It was so long since England had seen a favourite that the memory of Gaveston or De Vere had almost faded away. But favourites had been part of the system of the Scottish kings. Hemmed in by turbulent barons, unable to find counsellors among the nobles to whom the interests of the Crown were dearer than the interests of their class or their house, Stuart after Stuart had been driven to look for a counsellor and a minister in some dependant, bound to them by ties of personal attachment and of common danger. The Scotch nobles had dealt with such favourites after their manner. One they had hung, others they had stabbed; the last, David Rizzio, had fallen beneath their daggers at Mary's feet. But the notion of a personal dependant through whom his designs might take form for the outer world was as dear to James as to his predecessors, and the death of Cecil was soon followed by the appearance of favourites.

Carr.

There was an æsthetic element in the character of the Stuarts which had shown itself in the poems and architectural skill of those who had gone before James, as it was to show itself in the artistic and literary taste of his successor. In James, grotesque as was his own personal appearance, it took the form of a passionate admiration of manly beauty. It is possible that with the fanciful Platonism of the time he saw in the grace of the outer form evidence of a corresponding fairness in the soul within. If so, he was egregiously deceived. The first favourite whom he raised to honour, a Scotch page named Carr, was as worthless as he was handsome. But his faults passed unheeded. Without a single claim to

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distinction save the favour of the King, Carr rose at a bound to honours which Elizabeth had denied to Ralegh and to Drake. He was enrolled among English nobles, and raised to the peerage as Viscount Rochester. Young as he was, he at once became sole minister. The lords of the council found themselves to be mere cyphers. "At the Council-table," writes the Spanish Ambassador only a year after Cecil's death, "the Viscount Rochester showeth much temper and modesty without seeming to press or sway anything; but afterwards the King resolveth all business with him alone." So sudden and complete a revolution in the system of the state would have drawn ill-will on the favourite, even had Rochester shown himself worthy of the King's trust. But he seemed only eager to show his unworthiness. Through the year 1613 all England was looking on with wonder and disgust at his effort to break the marriage of Lord Essex with his wife, Frances Howard. Both had been young when they wedded; the passionate girl soon learned to hate her cold and formal husband; and she yielded readily enough to the seductions of the brilliant favourite. The guilty passion of the two was greedily seized on by the political intriguers of the court. Frances was daughter of a Howard, the Earl of Suffolk; and her father and uncle, the Earl of Northampton, who had already felt the influence of the favourite displacing their own, saw in the girl's shame a chance of winning this influence to their side. With this view they resolved to break the marriage with Essex, and to wed her to Rochester. A charge of impotency was trumped up against Essex as a ground of divorce, and a commission was named for its investigation. The charge was disproved, and with this disproof the case broke utterly down; but a fresh allegation was made that the Earl lay under a spell of witchcraft which incapacitated him from intercourse with his wife, though with her alone. The scandal grew as it became clear that the cause of Lady Essex was backed by the King. The resolute protest of

Archbishop Abbot against the proceedings was met by a petulant scolding from James, and when the Commissioners were evenly divided in their judgement the King added two known partizans of the Countess to turn their verdict. By means such as these, after four months of scandal and shame, a sentence of divorce was at last procured, and Lady Essex set free to marry the favourite.

Overbury's murder.

In the foul process of the divorce James had been either dupe or confederate. But throughout the same four months he had been either confederate or dupe in a more terrible tragedy. In his rise to greatness Rochester had been aided by the counsels of Sir Thomas Overbury. Overbury was a young man of singular wit and ability, but he had as few scruples as his master, and he was as ready to lend himself to the favourite's lust as to his ambition. He dictated for him in fact the letters which won the heart of Lady Essex. But if he backed the intrigue, he seems, from whatever cause, to have opposed the project of marriage. So great was his power over Rochester that the Howards deemed it needful to take him out of the way while the divorce was being brought about, and with this end they roused the King's jealousy of this influence over the favourite. James became as resolute to get rid of him as the Howards; he offered him an embassy if he would quit England, and when he refused, he treated his refusal as an offence against the state. Overbury was committed to the Tower, and he remained a close prisoner while the suit took its course. Whether more than imprisonment was designed by the Howards, or what was the part the two Earls played in the deeds that followed, is hard to tell. Still harder is it to tell the part of Rochester or of the King. But behind the web of political intrigue lay a woman's passion, and the part of Lady Essex is clear. Overbury had the secret of her shame to disclose, and she was resolved to silence him by death. A few days after the sentence of divorce was pronounced, he died in his prison, poisoned by her agents.

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The crime remained unknown; and not a whisper of it broke the King's exultation over his favourite's success. At the close of 1613 the scandal was crowned by the elevation of Rochester to the Earldom of Somerset and his union with Frances Howard. Murderess and adulteress as she was, the girl moved to her bridal through costly pageants which would have fitted the bridal of a Queen. The marriage was celebrated in the King's presence. Ben Jonson devised the wedding song. Bacon spent two thousand pounds in a wedding masque. The London Companies offered sumptuous gifts. James himself forced the Lord Mayor to entertain the bride with a banquet in Merchant Taylors' House, and the gorgeous wedding-train wound in triumph from Westminister to the City.

Immorality of the Court.

The shameless bridal was a fitting close to the shameless divorce, as both were outrages on the growing sense of morality. But they harmonized well enough with the profusion and profligacy of the Stuart Court. In spite of Cecil's economy, the treasury was drained to furnish masques and revels on a scale of unexampled splendour. While debts remained unpaid, land and jewels were lavished on young adventurers whose fair faces caught the royal fancy. Two years back Carr had been a penniless fortune-seeker. Now, though his ostensible revenues were not large, he was able to spend ninety thousand pounds in a single twelvemonths. The Court was as shameless as it was profuse. If the Court of Elizabeth was as immoral as that of her successor, its immorality had been shrouded by a veil of grace and chivalry. But no veil shrouded the degrading grossness of the Court of James. James was no drunkard, but he was a hard drinker, and with the people at large his hard drinking passed for drunkenness. When the Danish King visited England actors in a masque performed at Court were seen rolling intoxicated at his feet. The suit of Lady Essex had shown great nobles and officers of state content to play panders to their kinswoman. A yet more scandalous trial was soon to show

them in league with cheats and astrologers and poisoners. James had not shrunk from meddling busily in the divorce or from countenancing the bridal. Before scenes such as these the half-idolatrous reverence with which the sovereign had been regarded throughout the age of the Tudors died away into abhorrence and contempt. Court prelates might lavish their adulation on the virtues and wisdom of the Lord's anointed; but the players openly mocked at the King on the stage, while Puritans like Mrs. Hutchinson denounced the orgies of Whitehall in words as fiery as those with which Elijah denounced the profligacy of Jezebel.

Parliament of 1614.

But profligate and prodigal as was the Court, Somerset had to face the stern fact of an empty exchequer. The debt was growing steadily. It had now risen to seven hundred thousand pounds, while, in spite of the impositions, the annual deficit had mounted to two hundred thousand. The King had no mind to face the Parliament again; but a little experience of affairs had sobered the arrogance of the favourite, and there still remained counsellors of the same mind as Cecil, who pressed on him the need of reconciling the Houses with the Crown. What at last prevailed on the King were the pledges of some officious meddlers known as "undertakers" who promised to bring about the return to the House of Commons of a majority favourable to the demand of a subsidy. But pledges such as these fell dead before the general excitement which greeted the tidings of a new Parliament. Never had an election stirred so much popular passion as that of 1614. In every case where rejection was possible, the Court candidates were rejected. All the leading members of the country party, or as we should now term it, the Opposition, were again returned. But three hundred of the members were wholly new men; and among them we note for the first time the names of the leaders in the later struggle with the Crown. Calne returned John Pym; Yorkshire sent Thomas Wentworth; St. Germains

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chose John Eliot. Signs of unprecedented excitement were seen in the vehement cheering and hissing which for the first time marked the proceedings of the Commons. But, excited as they were, their policy was precisely that of the Parliament which had been dissolved three years before. James indeed was farther off from any notion of concession than ever; he had no mind to offer again the Great Contract or even to allow the subject of impositions to be named. But the Parliament was as firm as the King. It refused to grant supplies till it had considered public grievances, and it fixed on the impositions and the abuses of the Church as the first grievances to be redressed. Unluckily the inexperience of the bulk of the House of Commons led it into quarrelling on a point of privilege with the Lords; and though the Houses had sate but two months James seized on the quarrel as a pretext for a fresh dissolution.

Benevolences.

The courtiers mocked at the "addled Parliament," but a statesman would have learned much from the anger and excitement that ran through its stormy debates. During the session the King had been frightened beyond his wont by the tone of the Commons, but the only impressions which remained in his mind were those of wounded pride and stubborn resistance. He sent four of the leading members of the Lower House to the Tower, and fell back on an obstinate resolve to govern without any Parliament at all. The resolve was carried recklessly out through the next seven years. The protests of the Commons James looked on as a defiance of the Crown, and he met them in a spirit of counter-defiance. The abuses which Parliament after Parliament had denounced were not only continued but carried to a greater extent than before. The spiritual courts were encouraged in fresh encroachments. Though the Crown lawyers admitted the illegality of proclamations they were issued in greater numbers than ever. Impositions were strictly levied. But a policy of defiance did little to fill the empty treasury. A large

sum was gained by the sale to the Dutch of the towns which had been left by the States in pledge with Elizabeth; but even this supply was exhausted, and a fatal necessity drove James on to a formal and conscious breach of law. Whatever question might exist as to the legality of impositions, no question could exist since the statute of Richard the Third that benevolences were illegal. Nor was there any question that the levy of benevolences would rouse a deep and abiding resentment in the nation at large. Even in the height of the Tudor power Wolsey had been forced to abandon a resource which stirred England to revolt. But the Crown lawyers advised that while the statute forbade the exaction of loans it left the King free to ask for them; and James resolved to raise money by benevolences. At the close of the Parliament of 1614 therefore letters were sent out in the name of the Council demanding loans from the richer landowners. The letters remained generally unanswered; and in the autumn fresh letters had to be sent out in which the war which now threatened German Protestantism in the Palatinate was used to spur the loyalty of the country to a response. The judges on assize were ordered to press the King's demand. But prayer and pressure failed alike. In the three years which followed the dissolution the strenuous efforts of the sheriffs only raised sixty thousand pounds, a sum less than two-thirds of the value of a single subsidy. Devonshire, Nottinghamshire, and Warwickshire protested against the benevolences, and Somersetshire appealed to the statute which forbade them. It was in vain that the western remonstrants were silenced by threats from the Council, and that the laggard shires were rated for their sluggishness in payment. Two counties, those of Hereford and Stafford, sent not a penny to the last.

Increase of the Peerage.

In his distress for money the King was driven to expedients which widened the breach between the gentry and the Crown. He had refused to part with the feudal rights which came down to him from the Middle Ages, such as

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his right to the wardship of young heirs and the marriage of heiresses. These were now recklessly used as a means of extortion. Similar abuses of the prerogative alienated the merchant class. London, the main seat of their trade and wealth, was growing fast; and its growth roused terror in the government. In 1611 a proclamation forbade any increase of buildings. But the proclamation remained inoperative till it was seized as a means of extortion. A Commission was issued in 1614 with power to fine all who had disobeyed the King's injunctions, and by its means a considerable sum was gathered into the treasury. All that remained to be done was to alienate the nobles, and this James succeeded in doing by a measure in which political design went hand in hand with the needs of his finance. The Tudors had watched the baronage with jealousy, but they had made no attempt to degrade it. The nobles were sent to the prison and the block, but their rank and honours remained dignities which the Crown was chary to bestow even on the noblest of its servants. During the forty-five years of her reign Elizabeth raised but seven persons to the peerage, and with the exception of Burleigh all of these were of historic descent. The number of lay peers indeed had hardly changed for two centuries; they were about fifty at the accession of Henry the Fifth and counted but sixty at the accession of James. In so small an assembly, where the Crown could count on the unwavering support of ministers, courtiers, and bishops, the royal influence had through the last hundred years been generally supreme. But among the lords of the "old blood," as those whose honours dated from as far back as the Plantagenets were called, there lingered a spirit of haughty independence which, if it had quailed before the Tudors, showed signs of bolder life now the Tudors had gone. It was the policy of James to raise up a new nobility more dependent on the court, a nobility that might serve as a bridle on the older lords, while the increase in the numbers of the baronage which their creation

brought about lessened the weight which a peer had drawn from his special and unique position in the realm. Such a policy fell in with the needs of his treasury. Not only could he degrade the peerage by lavishing its honours, but he could degrade it yet more by putting them up to sale. Of the forty-five lay peers whom he added to the Upper House during his reign, a large number were created by sheer bargaining. Baronies were sold to bidders at ten thousand pounds a piece. Ten nobles were created in a batch. Peerages were given to the Scotch dependants whom James brought with him, to Hume and Hay, and Bruce and Ramsay, as well as to his favourites Carr and Villiers. Robartes, of Cornwall, a man who had risen to great wealth through the Cornish mines, complained that he had been forced to take a baronage, for which he had to pay ten thousand pounds to a favourite's use.

The dismissal of Coke.

That this profuse creation of peers was more than the result of passing embarrassment was shown by its continuance under James' successors. Charles the First bestowed no less than fifty-six peerages; Charles the Second forty-eight. But in its immediate application it was no doubt little more than one of those financial shifts by which the King put off from day to day the necessity of again facing the one body which could permanently arrest his effort after despotic rule. There still however remained a body whose tradition was strong enough, if not to arrest, at any rate to check it. The lawyers had been subservient beyond all other classes to the Crown. Their narrow pedantry bent slavishly then, as now, before isolated precedents, while then, as now, their ignorance of general history hindered them from realizing the conditions under which these precedents had been framed, and to which they owed their very varying value. It was thus that the judges had been brought to support James in his case of the Post-Nati or in the levy of impositions. But beyond precedents even the judges refused to go. They had done their best in a case that came before them to

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restrict the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts within legal and definite bounds, and their effort at once brought down on them the wrath of the King. All that affected the spiritual jurisdiction affected, he said, his prerogative; and whenever any case which affected his prerogative came before a court of justice he asserted that the King possessed an inherent right to be consulted as to the decision upon it. The judges timidly, though firmly, repudiated such a right as unknown to the law. To a King whose notions of law and of courts of law were drawn from those of Scotland, where justice had for centuries been a ready weapon in the royal hand, such a protest was utterly unintelligible. James sent for them to the royal closet. He rated them like schoolboys till they fell on their knees and with a single exception pledged themselves to obey his will. The one exception was the Chief Justice, Sir Edward Coke, a narrow-minded and bitter-tempered man, but of the highest eminence as a lawyer, and with a reverence for the law that overrode every other instinct. He had for some time been forced to evade the King's questions and 'closetings' on judicial cases by timely withdrawal from the royal presence. But now that he was driven to answer, he answered well. When any case came before him, he said he would act as it became a judge to act. Coke was at once dismissed from the council, and a provision which made the judicial office tenable at the King's pleasure, but which had long fallen into disuse, was revived to humble the common law in the person of its chief officer. In November, 1616, on the continuance of his resistance, he was deprived of his post of Chief Justice.

The Crown and the Law.

No act of James seems to have stirred a deeper resentment among Englishmen than this announcement of his resolve to tamper with the course of justice. The firmness of Coke in his refusal to consult with the King on matters affecting his prerogative was justified by what immediately followed. As James interpreted the phrase,

to consult with the King meant simply to obey the King's bidding as to what the judgement of a court should be. In the case which was then at issue he summoned the judges simply to listen to his decision; and the judges promised to enforce it. The King's course was an outrage on the growing sense of law; but his success was not without useful results. In his zeal to assert his personal will as the source of all power, whether judicial or other, James had struck one of its most powerful instruments from the hands of the Crown. He had broken the spell of the royal courts. If the good sense of Englishmen had revolted against their decisions in favour of the prerogative, the English reverence for law had made men submit to them. But now that all show of judicial independence was taken away, and the judges debased into mere mouthpieces of the King's will, the weight of their judgements came to an end. The nation had bent before their decision in favour of the Post-Nati; it had never a thought of bending before their decision in favour of Ship-money.

Fall of Somerset.

What an impassable gulf lay between the English conception of justice and that of James was shown even more vividly by the ruin of one who stood higher than Coke. At the opening of 1615 Somerset was still supreme. He held the rank of Lord Chamberlain; but he was practically the King's minister in state affairs, domestic or foreign. He was backed since his marriage by the influence of the Howards; and his father-in-law, Suffolk, was Lord Treasurer. He was girt round indeed by rivals and foes. The Queen was jealous of his influence over James; Archbishop Abbot dreaded his intrigues with Spain, intrigues which drew fresh meaning from the Catholic sympathies of the Howards; above all the older Lords of the Council, whom he ousted from any share in the government, watched eagerly for the moment when they hoped to regain their power by his fall. As he moved through the crowd of nobles he heard men

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muttering "that one man should not for ever rule them all." But Somerset's arrogance only grew with the danger. A new favourite was making way at court, and the King was daily growing colder. But Somerset only rated James for his coldness, demanded the dismissal of the new favourite, and refused to be propitiated by the King's craven apologies. His enemies however had a fatal card to play. In the summer whispers stole about of Overbury's murder, and of Somerset's part in it. The charge was laid secretly before the King, and a secret investigation conducted by his order threw darker and darker light on the story of guilt. Somerset was still unconscious of his peril, and the news that some meaner agents in the crime were arrested found him still with the King and in the seeming enjoyment of his wonted favour. He at once took horse for London to face his foes, and James parted from him with his usual demonstrations of affection. "He would neither eat nor drink," he said, "till he saw him again." He was hardly gone when James added, "I shall never see him more." His ruin in fact was already settled. In a few days he was a prisoner with his wife in the Tower; the agents in the fatal plot were sent to trial and to the gallows; and in May, 1616, the young Countess was herself brought before the Lord Steward's Court to avow her guilt. Somerset's daring nature made a more stubborn stand. He threatened the King with disclosures, we know not of what, and when arraigned denied utterly any share in the murder. All however was in vain; and he and the Countess were alike sentenced to death.

If ever justice called for the rigorous execution of the law, it was in the case of Frances Howard. Not only was the Countess a murderess, but her crime passed far beyond the range of common murders. Girl as she was when it was wrought, she had shown the coolness and deliberation of a practised assassin in her lust to kill. Chance foiled her efforts again and again, but she persisted for months, she changed her agents and her modes of

death, till her victim was slain. Nor was her crime without profit. She gained by it all she wanted. The secret of her adultery was hidden. There was no one to reveal the perjuries of her divorce. Her ambition and her passion were alike gratified. She became the bride of the man she desired. Her kindred filled the court. Her husband ruled the King. If crime be measured by its relentless purpose, if the guilt of crime be heightened by its amazing success, then no woman that ever stood in the dock was a greater criminal than the wife of Rochester. Nor was this all. The wretched agents in her crime were sent pitilessly to the gallows. The guilt of two of them was at least technically doubtful, but the doubt was not suffered to interfere with their punishment. Only in the one case where no doubt existed, in the case of the woman who had spurred and bribed these tools to their crime, was punishment spared. If life was left to such a criminal, the hanging of these meaner agents was a murder. But this was the course on which James had resolved, and he had resolved on it from the first. There was no more pressure on him. The rivals of Somerset had no need for his blood. The councillors and the new favourite required only his ruin, and James himself was content with being freed from a dependent who had risen to be his master. His pride probably shrank from the shame which the public death of such criminals on such a charge might bring on himself and his crown; his good-nature pleaded for pity, and the claims of justice never entered his head. Before the trial began he had resolved that neither should die, and the sentence of the Earl and the Countess was soon commuted into that of an easy confinement during a few years in the Tower.

Villiers.

The fall of Somerset seemed to restore the old system of rule; and for a short time the Council regained somewhat of its influence. But when the Queen gave her aid in Somerset's overthrow she warned Archbishop Abbot that it was only the investiture of a new favourite with

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Somerset's power. And a new favourite was already on the scene. It had only been possible indeed to overthrow the Earl by bringing a fresh face into the court. In the autumn of 1614 the son of a Leicestershire knight, George Villiers, presented himself to James. He was poor and friendless, but his personal beauty was remarkable, and it was by his beauty that he meant to make his way with the King. His hopes were soon realized. Queen, Primate, Councillors seized on the handsome youth to pit him against the favourite; in spite of Somerset's struggles he rose from post to post; and the Earl's ruin sealed his greatness. He became Master of the Horse; before the close of 1616 he was raised to the peerage as Viscount Villiers, and gifted with lands to the value of eighty thousand pounds. The next year he was Earl of Buckingham; in 1619 he was made Lord High Admiral; a marquisate and a dukedom raised him to the head of the English nobility. What was of far more import was the hold he gained upon the King. Those who had raised the handsome boy to greatness as a means of establishing their own power found themselves foiled. From the moment when Somerset entered the Tower, Villiers virtually took his place as Minister of State. The councillors soon found themselves again thrust aside. The influence of the new favourite surpassed that of his predecessor. The payment of bribes to him or marriage to his greedy kindred became the one road to political preferment. Resistance to his will was inevitably followed by dismissal from office. Even the highest and most powerful of the nobles were made to tremble at the nod of this young upstart.

His character.

"Never any man in any age, nor, I believe, in any country," says the astonished Clarendon in reviewing his strange career, "rose in so short a time to so much greatness of honour, power, or fortune, upon no other advantage or recommendation than of the beauty or gracefulness of his person." Such, no doubt, was the general explanation of his rise among men of the time; and it would have been

well had the account been true. The follies and profusion of a handsome minion pass lightly over the surface of a nation's life. Unluckily Villiers owed his fortune to other qualities besides personal beauty. He was amazingly ignorant, his greed was insatiate, his pride mounted to sheer midsummer madness. But he had no inconsiderable abilities. He was quick of wit and resolute of purpose; he shrank from no labour; his boldness and self-confidence faced any undertaking which was needful for the King's service; he was devoted, heart and soul, to the Crown. Over James his hold was that of a vehement and fearless temper over a mind infinitely better informed, infinitely more thoughtful and reflective, but vague and hesitating amidst all its self-conceit, crowded with theories and fancies, and with a natural bent to the unpractical and unreal. To such a mind the shallow, brilliant adventurer came as a relief. James found all his wise follies and politic moonshine translated for him into positive fact. He leant more and more heavily on an adviser who never doubted and was always ready to act. He drew strength from his favourite's self-confidence. Rochester had bent before greatness and listened more than once, even in the hour of his triumph, to the counsels of wiser men. But on the conceit of Villiers the warnings of Abbot, the counsels of Bacon, were lavished in vain. He saw no course but his own; and the showy, audacious temper of the man made that course always a showy and audacious one. It was this that made the choice of the new favourite more memorable than the choice of Carr. At a moment when conciliation and concession were most needed on the part of the Crown, the character of Villiers made concession and conciliation impossible. To James his new adviser seemed the weapon he wanted to smite with trenchant edge the resistance of the realm. He never dreamed that the haughty young favourite, on whose neck he loved to loll, and whose cheek he slobbered with kisses, was to drag down in his fatal career the throne of the Stuarts.

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As yet the temper of Villiers was as little known to the country as to the King. But the setting up of a new favourite on the ruin of the old had a significance which no Englishman could miss. It proved beyond question that the system of personal rule which was embodied in these dependent ministers was no passing caprice, but the settled purpose of the King. And never had such immense results hung on his resolve. Great as was the importance of the struggle at home, it was for a while to be utterly overshadowed by the greatness of the struggle which was opening abroad. The dangers which Cecil had foreseen in Germany were fast drawing to a head. Though he had failed to put England in a position to meet them, the dying statesman remained true to his policy. In 1612 he brought about a marriage between the King's daughter, Elizabeth, and the heir of the Elector Palatine, who was the leading prince in the Protestant Union. Such a marriage was a pledge that England would not tamely stand by if the Union was attacked; while the popularity of the match showed how keenly England was watching the dangers of German Protestantism, and how ready it was to defend it. But the step was hardly taken when Cecil's death left James free to pursue a policy of his own. The King was as anxious as his minister to prevent an outbreak of strife; and his daughter's bridal gave him a personal interest in the question. But he was far from believing with Cecil that the support of England was necessary for effective action. On the contrary, his quick, shallow intelligence held that it had found a way by which the Crown might at once exert weight abroad and be rendered independent of the nation at home. This was by a joint action with Spain. Weakened as were the resources of Spain by her struggle in the Netherlands, she was known to be averse from the opening of new troubles in Germany; and James might fairly reckon on her union with him in the work of peace. Her influence with the German branch of the House of Austria, as well as the weight her opinion had with every Catholic

power, made her efforts even more important than those of James with the Calvinists. And that such a union could be brought about the King never doubted. His son was growing to manhood; and for years Spain had been luring James to a closer friendship by hints of the Prince's marriage with an Infanta. Such a match would not only gratify the pride of a sovereign, who in his earlier days in his little kingdom had been overawed by the great Catholic monarchy, and on whose imagination it still exercized a spell, but it would proclaim to the world the union of the powers in the work of peace, while it provided James with the means of action. For poor as Spain really was, she was still looked upon as the richest state in the world; and the King believed that the bride would bring with her a dowry of some half a million. Such a dowry would set him free from the need of appealing to his Parliament, and give him the means of acting energetically on the Rhine.

The policy of Spain.

That there were difficulties in the way of such a policy, that Spain would demand concessions to the English Catholics, that the marriage would give England a Catholic queen, that the future heir of its crown must be trained by a Catholic mother, above all that the crown would be parted by plans such as these yet more widely from the sympathy of the nation, James could not but know. What he might have known as clearly, had he been a wise man instead of a merely clever man, was that, however such a bargain might suit himself, it was hardly likely to suit Spain. Spain was asked in effect to supply a bankrupt king with the means of figuring as the protector of Protestantism in Germany, while the only consideration offered to her was the hand of Prince Charles. But it never occurred to James to look at his schemes in any other light than his own. On the dissolution of the Parliament of 1614 he addressed a proposal of marriage to the Spanish court. Whatever was its ultimate purpose, Spain was careful to feed hopes which secured, so long as

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they lasted, better treatment for the Catholics, and which might be used to hold James from any practical action on behalf of the Protestants in Germany. Her cordiality increased as she saw, in spite of her protests, the crisis approaching. One member of the Austrian house, Ferdinand, had openly proclaimed and carried out his purpose of forcibly suppressing heresy in the countries he ruled, the Tyrol, Carinthia, Carniola, and Styria; and his succession to the childless Matthias in the rest of the Austrian dominions would infallibly be followed by a similar repression. To the Protestants of the Duchy, of Bohemia, of Hungary, therefore, the accession of Ferdinand meant either utter ruin or civil war, and a civil war would spread like wild-fire along the Danube to the Rhine. But Matthias was resolved on bringing about the recognition of Ferdinand as his successor; and Spain saw that the time was come for effectually fettering James. If troubles must arise, religion and policy at once dictated the use which Spain would have to make of them. She could not support heretics, and she had very good reasons for supporting their foes. The great aim of her statesmen was to hold what was left of the Low Countries against either France or the Dutch, and now that she had lost the command of the sea, the road overland from her Italian dominions along the Rhine through Franche Comté to the Netherlands was absolutely needful for this purpose. But this road led through the Palatinate; and if war was to break out Spain must either secure the Palatinate for herself or for some Catholic prince on whose good will she could rely. That the Dutch would oppose such a scheme was inevitable; but James alone could give fresh strength to the Dutch; and James could be duped into inaction by playing with his schemes for a marriage with the Infanta. In 1617 therefore negotiations for this purpose were formally opened between the courts of London and Madrid.

Ralegh's death.

Anger and alarm spread through England as the nation learned that James aimed at placing a Catholic queen

upon its throne. Even at the court itself the cooler heads of statesmen were troubled by this disclosure of the King's projects. The old tradition of Cecil's policy lingered among a powerful party which had its representatives among the royal ministers; and powerless as these were to influence the King's course, they still believed they could impede it. If by any means war could be stirred up between England and Spain the marriage-treaty would fall to ruin, and James be forced into union with the Protestants abroad and into some reconciliation with the Parliament at home. The wild project by which they strove to bring war about may have sprung from a brain more inventive than their own. Of the great statesmen and warriors of Elizabeth's day one only remained. At the opening of the new reign Sir Walter Ralegh had been convicted on a charge of treason; but though unpardoned the sentence was never carried out, and he had remained ever since a prisoner in the Tower. As years went by the New World, where he had founded Virginia and where he had gleaned news of a Golden City, threw more and more a spell over his imagination; and at this moment he disclosed to James his knowledge of a gold-mine on the Oronoco, and prayed that he might sail thither and work its treasures for the King. No Spanish settlement, he said, had been made there; and like the rest of the Elizabethans he took no heed of the Spanish claims to all lands in America, whether settled or no. The King was tempted by the bait of gold; but he had no mind to be tricked out of his friendship with Spain; he exacted a pledge against any attack on Spanish territory, and told Ralegh that the shedding of Spanish blood would cost him his head. The threat told little on a man who had risked his head again and again; who believed in the tale he told; and who knew that if war could be brought about between England and Spain a new career was open to him. He found the coast occupied by Spanish troops; and while evading direct orders to attack, he sent his men

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up the country. They plundered a Spanish town, found no gold-mine, and soon came broken and defeated back. Ralegh's son had fallen in the struggle; but, heart-broken as he was by the loss and disappointment, the natural daring of the man saw a fresh resource. He proposed to seize the Spanish treasure ships as he returned, to sail with their gold to England, and like Drake to turn the heads of nation and King by the immense spoil. But the temper of the buccaneers was now strange to English seamen; his men would not follow him; and he was brought home to face his doom. James at once put his old sentence in force; and the death of Ralegh on the scaffold atoned for the affront to Spain.

The troubles in Bohemia.

The failure of Ralegh came at a critical moment in German history. In 1617, while he was traversing the Southern seas, Ferdinand was presented by Matthias to the Diet of Bohemia, and acknowledged by it as successor to that kingdom. As had been foreseen, he at once began the course of forcible conversion to Catholicism which had been successful in his other dominions. But the Bohemian nobles were not men to give up their faith without a fight for it; and in May, 1618, they rose in revolt, flung Ferdinand's deputies out of the window of the palace at Prague, and called the country to arms. The long-dreaded crisis had come for Germany; but, as if with a foresight of the awful sufferings that the struggle was to bring, the Germans strove to look on it as a local revolt. The Lutheran princes longed only "to put the fire out;" the Calvinistic Union refused aid to the Bohemians; the Catholic League remained motionless. What partly accounted for the inaction of the Protestants was the ability of the Bohemians to hold their own. They were a match for all Ferdinand's efforts; through autumn and winter they held him easily at bay. In the spring of 1619 they even marched upon Vienna and all but surprized their enemy within his capital. But at this juncture the death of Matthias changed the face of affairs.

Ferdinand became master of the whole Austrian heritage in Germany, and he offered himself as candidate for the vacant Imperial crown. Union among the Protestants might have hindered his accession, and with it the terrible strife which he was to bring upon the Empire. But an insane quarrel between Lutherans and Calvinists paralyzed their efforts; and in August, 1619, Ferdinand became Emperor. Bohemia knew that its strength was insufficient to check a foe such as this; and two days before his formal election to the Empire its nobles declared the realm vacant, and chose Frederick, the young Elector-Palatine, as their king.

Outbreak of the Thirty Years War.

Frederick accepted the crown; but he was no sooner enthroned at Prague than the Bohemians saw themselves foiled in the hopes which had dictated their choice. They had trusted that Frederick's election would secure them support from the Calvinist Union, of which he was the leading member, and from James, whose daughter was his wife. But support from the Union was cut off by the jealousy of the French Government, which saw with suspicion the upgrowth of a great Calvinistic power, stretching from Bohemia to its own frontier, and pushing its influence through its relations with the Huguenot party into the very heart of France. James on the other hand was bitterly angered at Frederick's action. He could not recognize the right of subjects to depose a prince, or support Bohemia in what he looked on as revolt, or Frederick in what he believed to be the usurpation of a crown. By envoy after envoy he called on his son-in-law to lay down his new royalty, and to return to the Palatinate. His refusal of aid to the Protestant Union helped the pressure of France in paralyzing its action, while he threatened war against Holland, the one power which was earnest in the Palatine's cause. It was in vain that in England both court and people were unanimous in a cry for war, or that Archbishop Abbot from his sick-bed implored James to strike one blow for Protestantism. James still

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called on Frederick to withdraw from Bohemia, and relied in such a case on the joint efforts of England and Spain for a re-establishment of peace. But no consent to his plans could be wrung from Frederick; and the spring of 1620 saw Spain ready to throw aside the mask. The time had come for securing her road to the Netherlands, as well as for taking her old stand as a champion of Catholicism. Rumours of her purpose had already stolen over the Channel, and James was brought at last to suffer Sir Horace Vere to take some English volunteers to the Palatinate. But the succour came too late. Spinola, the Spanish general in the Low Countries, was ordered to march to the aid of the Emperor; and the famous Spanish battalions were soon moving up the Rhine. Their march turned the local struggle in Bohemia into a European war. The whole face of affairs was changed as by enchantment. The hesitation of the Union was ended by the needs of self-defence; but it could only free its hands for action against the Spaniards by signing a treaty of neutrality with the Catholic League. The treaty sealed the fate of Bohemia. It enabled the army of the League under Maximilian of Bavaria to march down the valley of the Danube; Austria was forced to submit unconditionally to Ferdinand; and in August, as Spinola reached the frontier of the Palatinate, the joint army of Ferdinand and the League prepared to enter Bohemia.

The Parliament of 1621.

On James the news of these events burst like a thunderbolt. He had been duped; and for the moment he bent before the burst of popular fury which the danger to German Protestantism called forth throughout the land. The cry for a Parliament, the necessary prelude to a war, overpowered the King's secret resistance; and the Houses were again called together. But before they could meet the game of Protestantism was lost. Spinola beat the troops of the Union back upon Worms, and occupied with ease the bulk of the Palatinate. On the 8th of November the army of the League forced Frederick to battle before

the walls of Prague; and before the day was over he was galloping off, a fugitive, to North Germany. Such was the news that met the Houses on their assembly at Westminster in January, 1621. The instinct of every Englishman told him that matters had now passed beyond the range of mediation or diplomacy. Armies were moving, fierce passions were aroused, schemes of vast ambition and disturbance were disclosing themselves; and at such a moment the only intervention possible was an intervention of the sword. The German princes called on James to send them an army. "The business is gone too far to be redressed with words only," said the Danish King, who was prepared to help them. "I thank God we hope, with the help of his Majesty of Great Britain and the rest of our friends, to give unto the Count Palatine good conditions. If ever we are to do any good for the liberty of Germany and religion now is the time." But this appeal met offers of "words only" and Denmark withdrew from the strife in despair. James in fact was as confident in his diplomatic efforts as ever; but even he saw at last that they needed the backing of some sort of armed force, and it was to procure this backing that he called for supplies from the Parliament.

Impeachment of the monopolists.

The Commons were bitterly chagrined. They had come together, trusting that their assembly meant such an attitude on the part of the Crown as would have rallied the Protestants of Germany round England, and have aided the enterprize of the Dane. Above all they hoped for war with the power which had at once turned the strife to its own profit, whose appearance in the Palatinate had broken the strength of German Protestantism, and set the League free to crush Frederick at Prague. They found only demands for supplies, and a persistence in the old efforts to patch up a peace. Fresh envoys were now labouring to argue the Emperor into forgiveness of Frederick, and to argue the Spaniards into an evacuation of Frederick's dominions. With such aims not only was no war against

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the Spaniard to be thought of, but his good will must be sought by granting permission for the export of arms from England to Spain. The Commons could only show their distrust of such a policy by a small vote of supplies and refusal of further aid in the future. But if their resentment could find no field in foreign affairs, it found a field at home. The most crying constitutional grievance arose from the revival of monopolies, in spite of the pledge of Elizabeth to suppress them. To the Crown they brought little profit; but they gratified the King by their extension of the sphere of his prerogative, and they put money into the pockets of his greedy dependents. A parliamentary right which had slept ever since the reign of Henry the Sixth, the right of the Lower House to impeach great offenders at the bar of the Lords, was revived against the monopolists; and James was driven by the general indignation to leave them to their fate. But the practice of monopolies was only one sign of the corruption of the court. Sales of peerages, sales of high offices of State, had raised a general disgust; and this disgust showed itself in the impeachment of the highest among the officers of State.

Fall of Bacon.

At the accession of James the rays of royal favour, so long looked for in vain, had broken slowly upon Francis Bacon. He became successively Solicitor and Attorney-General; the year of Shakspere's death saw him called to the Privy Council; he verified Elizabeth's prediction by becoming Lord Keeper. At last the goal of his ambition was reached. He had attached himself to the rising fortunes of Buckingham, and in 1618 the favour of Buckingham made him Lord Chancellor. He was raised to the peerage as Baron Verulam, and created, at a later time, Viscount St. Albans. But the nobler dreams for which these meaner honours had been sought escaped Bacon's grasp. His projects still remained projects, while to retain his hold on office he was stooping to a miserable compliance with the worst excesses of Buckingham

and his master. The years during which he held the Chancellorship were, in fact, the most disgraceful years of a disgraceful reign. They saw the execution of Ralegh, the sacrifice of the Palatinate, the exaction of benevolences, the multiplication of monopolies, the supremacy of Buckingham. Against none of the acts of folly and wickedness which distinguished James's government did Bacon do more than protest; in some of the worst, and above all in the attempt to coerce the judges into prostrating the law at the King's feet, he took a personal part. But even his protests were too much for the young favourite, who regarded him as the mere creature of his will. It was in vain that Bacon flung himself on the Duke's mercy, and begged him to pardon a single instance of opposition to his caprice. A Parliament was impending, and Buckingham resolved to avert from himself the storm which was gathering by sacrificing to it his meaner dependents.

To ordinary eyes the Chancellor was at the summit of human success. Jonson had just sung of him as one "whose even thread the Fates spin round and full out of their choicest and their whitest wool" when the storm burst. The Commons charged Bacon with corruption in the exercise of his office. It had been customary among Chancellors to receive gifts from successful suitors after their suit was ended. Bacon, it is certain, had taken such gifts from men whose suits were still unsettled; and though his judgement may have been unaffected by them, the fact of their reception left him with no valid defence. He at once pleaded guilty to the charge. "I do plainly and ingenuously confess that I am guilty of corruption, and do renounce all defence. I beseech your Lordships," he added, "to be merciful to a broken reed." Though the heavy fine laid on him was remitted by the Crown, he was deprived of the Great Seal and declared incapable of holding office in the State or sitting in Parliament. Fortunately for his after fame Bacon's life was not to close in this cloud of shame. His fall restored him to that position of real

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greatness from which his ambition had so long torn him away. "My conceit of his person" says Ben Jonson "was never increased towards him by his place or honours. But I have and do reverence him for his greatness that was only proper to himself, in that he seemed to me ever by his work one of the greatest men, and most worthy of admiration, that had been in many ages. In his adversity I ever prayed that God would give him strength; for greatness he could not want." Bacon's intellectual activity was never more conspicuous than in the last four years of his life. He began a digest of the laws and a history of England under the Tudors, revised and expanded his essays, and dictated a jest-book. He had presented "Novum Organum" to James in the year before his fall; in the year after it he produced his "Natural and Experimental History." Meanwhile he busied himself with experiments in physics which might carry out the principles he was laying down in these works; and it was while studying the effect of cold in preventing animal putrefaction that he stopped his coach to stuff a fowl with snow and caught the fever which ended in his death.

James clings to Spain.

James was too shrewd to mistake the importance of Bacon's impeachment; but the hostility of Buckingham to the Chancellor, and Bacon's own confession of his guilt, made it difficult to resist his condemnation. Energetic too as its measures were against corruption and monopolists, the Parliament respected scrupulously the King's prejudices in other matters; and even when checked by an adjournment, resolved unanimously to support him in any earnest effort for the Protestant cause. A warlike speech from a member at the close of the session in June roused an enthusiasm which recalled the days of Elizabeth. The Commons answered the appeal by a unanimous vote, "lifting their hats as high as they could hold them," that for the recovery of the Palatinate they would adventure their fortunes, their estates, and their lives. "Rather this declaration," cried a leader of the country party when it was read by the

Speaker, "than ten thousand men already on the march." For the moment indeed the energetic declaration seemed to give vigour to the royal policy. James had aimed throughout at the restitution of Bohemia to Ferdinand, and at inducing the Emperor, through the mediation of Spain, to abstain from any retaliation on the Palatinate. He now freed himself for a moment from the trammels of diplomacy, and enforced a cessation of the attack on his son-in-law's dominions by a threat of war. The suspension of arms lasted through the summer of 1621; but threats could do no more. Frederick still refused to make the concessions which James pressed on him, and the army of the League advancing from Bohemia drove the forces of the Elector out of the upper or eastern portion of the Palatinate. Again the general restoration which James was designing had been thrown further back than ever by a Catholic advance; but the King had no mind to take up the challenge. He was only driven the more on his old policy of mediation through the aid of Spain. An end was put to all appearance of hostilities. The negotiations for the marriage with the Infanta, which had never ceased, were pressed more busily. Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador, who had become all-powerful at the English Court, was assured that no effectual aid should be sent to the Palatinate. The English fleet, which was cruising by way of menace off the Spanish coast, was called home. The King dismissed those of his ministers who still opposed a Spanish policy; and threatened on trivial pretexts a war with the Dutch, the one great Protestant power that remained in alliance with England, and was ready to back the Elector.

Dissolution of the Parliament.

But he had still to reckon with his Parliament; and the first act of the Parliament on its re-assembling in November was to demand a declaration of war with Spain. The instinct of the nation was wiser than the statecraft of the King. Ruined and enfeebled as she really was, Spain to the world at large still seemed the

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champion of Catholicism. It was the entry of her troops into the Palatinate which had widened the local war in Bohemia into a struggle for the suppression of Protestantism along the Rhine; above all it was Spanish influence, and the hopes held out of a marriage of his son with a Spanish Infanta, which were luring the King into his fatal dependence on the great enemy of the Protestant cause. But the Commons went further than a demand for war. It was impossible any longer to avoid a matter so perilous to English interests, and in their petition the Houses coupled with their demands for war the demand of a Protestant marriage for their future King. Experience proved in later years how dangerous it was for English freedom that the heir to the Crown should be brought up under a Catholic mother; but James was beside himself at the presumption of the Commons in dealing with mysteries of State. "Bring stools for the Ambassadors," he cried in bitter irony as their committee appeared before him. He refused the petition, forbade any further discussion of State policy, and threatened the speakers with the Tower. "Let us resort to our prayers," a member said calmly as the King's letter was read, "and then consider of this great business." The temper of the House was seen in a Protestation with which it met the royal command to abstain from discussion. It resolved "That the liberties, franchises, privileges, and jurisdictions of Parliament are the ancient and undoubted birthright and inheritance of the subjects of England; and that the arduous and urgent affairs concerning the King, State, and defence of the realm, and of the Church of England, and the making and maintenance of laws, and redress of grievances, which daily happen within this realm, are proper subjects and matter of council and debate in Parliament. And that in the handling and proceeding of those businesses every member of the House hath, and of right ought to have, freedom of speech to propound, treat, reason, and bring to conclusion the same." The King answered the

Protestation by a characteristic outrage. He sent for the Journals of the House, and with his own hand tore out the pages which contained it. "I will govern," he said, "according to the common weal, but not according to the common will." A few days after, on the nineteenth of December, he dissolved the Parliament.

Spain holds back.

"It is the best thing that has happened in the interests of Spain and of the Catholic religion since Luther began preaching," wrote the Count of Gondomar to his master, in his joy that all danger of war had passed away. "I am ready to depart," Sir Henry Savile on the other hand murmured on his death-bed, "the rather that having lived in good times I foresee worse." In the obstinacy with which he clung to his Spanish policy James stood indeed absolutely alone; for not only the old nobility and the statesmen who preserved the tradition of the age of Elizabeth, but even his own ministers, with the exception of Buckingham and the Treasurer, Cranfield, were at one with the Commons in their distrust of Spain. But James persisted in his plans. By the levy of a fresh benevolence he was able to keep Vere's force on foot for a few months while his diplomacy was at work in Germany and at Madrid. The Palatinate indeed was lost in spite of his despatches; but he still trusted to bring about its restitution to the Elector through his influence with Spain. It was to secure this influence that he pressed for a closer union with the great Catholic power. What really bound him to such a foreign policy was his policy at home. If James cared for the restoration of the Palatinate he cared more for the system of government he had carried out since 1610; and with that system, as he well knew, Parliaments were incompatible. But a policy of war would at once throw him on the support of Parliaments; and the experience of 1621 had shown him at what a price that support must be bought. From war too, as from any policy which implied a decided course of action, the temper of James shrank. What he clung to was a co-operation with Spain in which the burden

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of enforcing peace on the German disputants should fall exclusively on that power. Of such a co-operation the marriage of his son Charles with the Infanta, which had so long been held out as a lure to his vanity, was to be the sign. But the more James pressed for this consummation of his projects, the more Spain held back. She too was willing to co-operate with James so long as such a co-operation answered her own purposes. Her statesmen had not favoured the war in Germany; even now they were willing to bring it to a close by the restoration of the Palatinate. But they would not abandon the advantages which the war had given to Catholicism; and their plan was to restore the Palatinate not to Frederick but to his son, and to bring up that son as a Catholic at Vienna. Of such a simple restoration of the religious and political balance in the Empire as James was contemplating, the statesmen of Madrid thought no more than they thought of carrying out the scheme of a marriage with his son. Spain had already gained all she wanted from the marriage-negotiations. They had held James from action; they had now made action even less possible by supplying a fresh ground of quarrel with the House of Commons. Had the match been likely to secure the conversion of England, or even a thorough toleration for Catholics, it might have been possible to consent to the union of a Spanish princess with a heretic. But neither result seemed probable: and the Spanish Court saw no gain in such a union as would compensate it for the loss of the Palatinate or the half-million which James counted on as the dowry of the bride.

End of the Spanish marriage.

But the more Spain hung back the hotter grew the impatience of Buckingham and James. At last the young favourite proposed to force the Spaniard's hand by the appearance of Prince Charles himself at Madrid. To the wooer in person Buckingham believed Spain would not dare to refuse either Infanta or Palatinate. James was too shrewd to believe in such a delusion, but in spite of his opposition the Prince quitted England in disguise in

1623, and at the beginning of March he appeared with Buckingham at Madrid to claim his promised bride. It was in vain that the Spanish Court rose in its demands; for every new demand was met by fresh concessions on the part of England. The abrogation of the penal laws against the worship of Catholics in private houses, a Catholic education for the Prince's children, a Catholic household for the Infanta, the erection of a Catholic church for her at Court, to which access should be free for all comers, were stipulations no sooner asked than they were granted. "We are building a chapel to the devil," said James when the last condition was laid before him; but he swore to the treaty and forced his councillors to swear to it. The marriage, however, was no nearer than before. The one thing which would have made it possible was a conversion of Charles to Catholicism; and though the Prince listened silently to arguments on the subject he gave no sign of becoming a Catholic. The aim of the Spanish ministers was to break off the match without a quarrel. They could only throw themselves on a policy of delay, and with this view the court theologians decided that the Infanta must in any case stay in Spain for a year after its conclusion till the conditions were fully carried out. Against such a condition Charles remonstrated in vain. And meanwhile the influence of the new policy on the war in Germany was hard to see. The Catholic League and its army under the command of Count Tilly won triumph after triumph over their divided foes. The reduction of Heidelberg and Mannheim completed the conquest of the Palatinate, whose Elector fled helplessly to Holland, while his Electoral dignity was transferred by the Emperor to the Duke of Bavaria. But there was still no sign of the hoped-for intervention on the part of Spain. At last the pressure of Charles on the subject of the Palatinate brought about a disclosure of the secret of Spanish policy. "It is a maxim of state with us," the

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Duke of Olivarez confessed, as the Prince demanded an energetic interference in Germany, "that the King of Spain must never fight against the Emperor. We cannot employ our forces against the Emperor." "If you hold to that," replied the Prince, "there is an end of all." Quitting Madrid he found a fleet at Santander, and on the fifth of October he again landed with Buckingham on the shores of England.

Prince Charles.

His return was the signal for a burst of national joy. All London was alight with bonfires in her delight at the failure of the Spanish match, and of the collapse, humiliating as it was, of a policy which had so long trailed English honour at the chariot-wheels of Spain. War seemed at last inevitable; for not only did James's honour call for some effort to win back the Palatinate for his daughter's children, but the resentment of Charles and Buckingham was ready to bear down any reluctance of the King. From the moment of their return indeed the direction of English affairs passed out of the hands of James into those of the favourite and the Prince. Charles started on his task of government with the aid of a sudden burst of popularity. To those who were immediately about him the journey to Madrid had revealed the strange mixture of obstinacy and weakness in the Prince's character, the duplicity which lavished promises because it never purposed to be bound by any, the petty pride that subordinated every political consideration to personal vanity or personal pique. Charles had granted demand after demand till the very Spaniards lost faith in his concessions. With rage in his heart at the failure of his efforts, he had renewed his betrothal on the very eve of his departure only that he might insult the Infanta by its contemptuous withdrawal as soon as he was safe at home. But to England at large the baser features of his character were still unknown. The stately reserve, the personal dignity and decency of manners which distinguished the Prince, contrasted favourably with the gabble and

indecorum of his father. The courtiers indeed who saw him in his youth would often pray God that "he might be in the right way when he was set; for if he were in the wrong he would prove the most wilful of any king that ever reigned." But the nation was willing to take his obstinacy for firmness; as it took the pique which inspired his course on the return from Spain for patriotism and for the promise of a nobler rule.

The Parliament of 1624.

At the back of Charles stood the favourite Buckingham. The policy of James had recoiled upon its author. In raising his favourites to the height of honour James had looked to being at last an independent king. He had broken with parliaments, he had done away with the old administrative forms of government, that his personal rule might act freely through these creatures of his will. And now that his policy had reached its end, his will was set aside more ruthlessly than ever by the very instrument he had created to carry it out. In his zeal to establish the greatness of the monarchy he had brought on the monarchy a humiliation such as it had never known. Church, or Baronage, or Commons had many times in our history forced a king to take their policy for his own; but never had a mere minister of the Crown been able to force his policy on a king. This was what Buckingham set himself to do. The national passion, the Prince's support, his own quick energy, bore down the hesitation and reluctance of James. The King still clung desperately to peace. He still shrank from parliaments. But Buckingham overrode every difficulty. In February, 1624, James was forced to meet a Parliament, and to concede the point on which he had broken with the last by laying before it the whole question of the Spanish negotiation. Buckingham and the Prince gave their personal support to a demand of the Houses for a rupture of the treaties with Spain and a declaration of war. A subsidy was eagerly voted; and as if to mark a new departure in the policy of the Stuarts, the persecution of the Catholics,

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which had long been suspended out of deference to Spanish intervention, began with new vigour. The favourite gave a fresh pledge of his constitutional aims by consenting to a new attack on a minister of the Crown. The Lord Treasurer, Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex, had done much by his management of the finances to put the royal revenues on a better footing. But he was the head of the Spanish party; and he still urged the King to cling to Spain and to peace. Buckingham and Charles therefore looked coldly on while he was impeached for corruption and dismissed from office.

Buckingham's plans.

Though James was swept along helplessly by the tide, his shrewdness saw clearly the turn that affairs were taking; and it was only by hard pressure that the favourite succeeded in wresting his consent to Cranfield's disgrace. "You are making a rod for your own back," said the King. But Buckingham and Charles persisted in their plans of war. That these were utterly different from the plans of the Parliament troubled them little. What money the Commons had granted, they had granted on condition that the war should be exclusively a war against Spain, and a war waged as exclusively by sea. Their good sense shrank from plunging into the tangled and intricate medley of religious and political jealousies which was turning Germany into a hell. What they saw to be possible was to aid German Protestantism by lifting off it the pressure of the armies of Spain. That Spain was most assailable on the sea the ministers at Madrid knew as well as the leaders of the Commons. What they dreaded was not a defeat in the Palatinate, but the cutting off of their fleets from the Indies and a war in that new world which they treasured as the fairest flower of their crown. A blockade of Cadiz or a capture of Hispaniola would have produced more effect at the Spanish council-board than a dozen English victories on the Rhine. But such a policy had little attraction for Buckingham. His flighty temper exulted in being the arbiter of Europe, in weaving fanciful alliances, in

marshalling imaginary armies. A treaty was concluded with Holland, and negotiations set on foot with the Lutheran princes of North Germany, who had looked coolly on at the ruin of the Elector Palatine, but were scared at last into consciousness of their own danger. Yet more important negotiations were opened for an alliance with France. To restore the triple league of France, England, and Holland was to restore the system of Elizabeth. Such a league would in fact have been strong enough to hold in check the House of Austria and save German Protestantism, while it would have hindered France from promoting and profiting by German disunion, as it did under Richelieu. But, as of old, James could understand no alliance that rested on merely national interests. A dynastic union seemed to him the one sure basis for joint action; and the plan for a French alliance became a plan for marriage with a French princess.

The French marriage.

The plan suited the pride of Charles and of Buckingham. But the first whispers of it woke opposition in the Commons. They saw the danger of a Roman Catholic queen. They saw yet more keenly the danger of pledges of toleration given to a foreign government, pledges which would furnish it with continual pretexts for interfering in the civil government of the country. Such an interference would soon breed on either side a mood for war. Before making these grants therefore they had called for a promise that no such pledges should be given, and as a subsidy hung on his consent James had solemnly promised this. But it was soon found that France was as firm on this point as Spain; and that toleration for the Catholics was a necessary condition of any marriage-treaty. The pressure of Buckingham and Charles was again brought to bear upon the King. The promise was broken and the marriage-treaty was signed. Its difficulties were quick to disclose themselves. It was impossible to call Parliament again together at winter tide, while such perfidy was fresh; and the subsidies, which had been counted

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on, could not be asked for. But a hundred schemes were pushed busily on; and twelve thousand Englishmen were gathered under an adventurer, Count Mansfield, to march to the Rhine. They reached Holland only to find themselves without supplies and to die of famine and disease.

Death of James.

If the blow fell lightly on the temper of the favourite, it fell heavily on the King. James was already sinking to the grave, and in the March of 1625 he died with the consciousness of failure. Even his sanguine temper was broken at last. He had struggled with the Parliament, and the Parliament was stronger than ever. He had broken with Puritanism, and England was growing more Puritan every day. He had claimed for the Crown authority such as it had never known, and the Commons had impeached and degraded his ministers. He had raised up dependants to carry out a purely personal rule, and it was a favourite who was now treading his will under foot. He had staked everything on his struggle with English freedom, and the victory of English freedom was well-nigh won. James had himself destroyed that enthusiasm of loyalty which had been the main strength of the Tudor throne. He had disenchanted his people of their blind faith in the monarchy by a policy both at home and abroad which ran counter to every national instinct. He had alienated alike the noble, the gentleman, and the trader. In his feverish desire for personal rule he had ruined the main bulwarks of the monarchy. He had destroyed the authority of the council. He had accustomed men to think lightly of the ministers of the crown, to see them browbeaten by favourites, and driven from office for corruption. He had degraded the judges and weakened the national reverence for their voice as an expression of law. He had turned the Church into a mere engine for carrying out the royal will. And meanwhile he had raised up in the very face of the throne a power which was strong enough to cope with it. He had quarrelled with and

insulted the Houses as no English sovereign had ever done before; and all the while the authority he boasted of was passing without his being able to hinder it to the Parliament which he outraged. There was shrewdness as well as anger in his taunt at its "ambassadors." A power had at last risen up in the Commons with which the monarchy was to reckon. In spite of the king's petulant outbreaks Parliament had asserted with success its exclusive right of taxation. It had suppressed monopolies. It had reformed abuses in the courts of law. It had impeached and driven from office the highest ministers of the crown. It had asserted its privilege of freely discussing all questions connected with the welfare of the realm. It had claimed to deal with the question of religion. It had even declared its will on the sacred "mystery" of foreign policy. The utter failure of the schemes of James at home can only be realized by comparing the attitude of the Houses at his death with their attitude during the last years of Elizabeth. Nor was his failure less abroad than at home. He had found England among the greatest of European powers. He had degraded her into a satellite of Spain. And now from a satellite he had dropped to the position of a dupe. In one plan alone could he believe himself successful. If his son had missed the hand of a Spanish Infanta, he had gained the hand of a daughter of France. But the one success of James was the most fatal of all his blunders; for in the marriage with Henrietta Maria lay the doom of his race. It was the fierce and despotic temper of the Frenchwoman that was to nerve Charles more than all to his fatal struggle against English liberty. It was her bigotry—as the Commons foresaw—that undermined the Protestantism of her sons. It was when the religious and the political temper of Henrietta mounted the throne in James the Second that the full import of the French marriage was seen in the downfall of the Stuarts.

CHAPTER V.

CHARLES I. AND THE PARLIAMENT.

1625—1629.

Charles the First.

HAD Charles mounted the throne on his return from Spain his accession would have been welcomed by a passionate burst of enthusiasm. He had aired himself as a staunch Protestant who had withstood Catholic seductions, and had come to nerve his father to a policy at one with the interests of religion and with the national will. But the few months that had passed since the last session of Parliament had broken the spell of this heroic attitude. The real character of the part which Charles had played in Spain was gradually becoming known. It was seen that he had been as faithless to Protestantism as his revenge had made him faithless to the Infanta. Nor had he shown less perfidy in dealing with England itself. In common with his father, he had promised that his marriage with a princess of France should in no case be made conditional on the relaxation of the penal laws against the Catholics. It was suspected, and the suspicion was soon to be changed into certainty, that in spite of this promise such a relaxation had been stipulated, and that a foreign power had again been given the right of intermeddling in the civil affairs of the realm. The general distrust of the new King was intensified by the conduct of the war. In granting its subsidies the Parliament of 1624 had restricted them to the purposes of a naval war, and that a war with Spain. It had done this after discussing and rejecting the wider schemes of

the favourite for an intervention of England by land in the war of the Palatinate. But the grants once made, Buckingham's plans had gone on without a check. Alliances had been formed, subsidies promised to Denmark, and twelve thousand men actually despatched to join the armies on the Rhine. It was plain that the policy of the Crown was to be as unswayed by the will of the nation as in the days of King James. What it was really to be swayed by was the self-sufficient incapacity of the young favourite.

The King's policy.

A few months of action had shown Buckingham to England as he really was, vain, flighty, ingenious, daring, a brilliant but shallow adventurer, without political wisdom or practical ability, as little of an administrator as of a statesman. While projects without number were seething and simmering in his restless brain, while leagues were being formed and armies levied on paper, the one practical effort of the new minister had ended in the starvation of thousands of Englishmen on the sands of Holland. If English policy was once more to become a real and serious thing, it was plain that the great need of the nation was the dismissal of Buckingham. But Charles clung to Buckingham more blindly than his father had done. The shy reserve, the slow stubborn temper of the new King found relief in the frank gaiety of the favourite, in his rapid suggestions, in the defiant daring with which he set aside all caution and opposition. James had looked on Buckingham as his pupil. Charles clung to him as his friend. Nor was the new King's policy likely to be more national in Church affairs than in affairs of state. The war had given a new impulse to religious enthusiasm. The patriotism of the Puritan was strengthening his bigotry. To the bulk of Englishmen a fight with Spain meant a fight with Catholicism; and the fervour against Catholicism without roused a corresponding fervour against Catholicism within the realm. To Protestant eyes every English Catholic seemed a traitor at home, a traitor who

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must be watched and guarded against as the most dangerous of foes. A Protestant who leant towards Catholic usage or Catholic dogma was yet more formidable. To him men felt as towards a secret traitor in their own ranks. But it was to men with such leanings that Charles seemed disposed to show favour. Bishop Laud was recognized as the centre of that varied opposition to Puritanism, whose members were loosely grouped under the name of Arminians; and Laud now became the King's adviser in ecclesiastical matters. With Laud at its head the new party grew in boldness as well as numbers. It naturally sought for shelter for its religious opinions by exalting the power of the Crown; and its union of political error with theological heresy seemed to the Puritan to be at last proclaimed to the world when Montague, a court chaplain, ventured to slight the Reformed Churches of the Continent in favour of the Church of Rome, and to advocate in his sermon the Real Presence in the Sacrament and a divine right in kings.

The Parliament of 1625.

The Houses had no sooner met in the May of 1625 than their temper in religious matters was clear to every observer. "Whatever mention does break forth of the fears and dangers in religion and the increase of Popery," wrote a member who was noting the proceedings of the Commons, "their affections are much stirred." The first act of the Lower House was to summon Montague to its bar and to commit him to prison. In their grants to the Crown they showed no ill-will indeed, but they showed caution. They suspected that the pledge of making no religious concessions to France had been broken. They knew that the conditions on which the last subsidy had been granted had been contemptously set aside. In his request for a fresh grant Charles showed the same purpose of carrying out his own policy without any regard for the national will by simply asking for supplies for the war without naming a sum or giving any indication of what war it was to support. The reply of the Commons was to grant a hundred and forty

thousand pounds. A million would hardly cover the King's engagements, and Charles was bitterly angered. He was angered yet more by the delay in granting the permanent revenue of the Crown. The Commons had no wish to refuse their grant of tonnage and poundage, or the main customs duties, which had ever since Edward the Fourth's day been granted to each new sovereign for his life. But the additional impositions laid by James on these duties required further consideration, and to give time for a due arrangement of this vexed question the grant of the customs was made for a year only. But the limitation at once woke the jealousy of Charles. He looked on it as a restriction of the rights of the Crown, refused to accept the grant on such a condition, and adjourned the Houses. When they met again at Oxford it was in a sterner temper, for Charles had shown his defiance of Parliament by drawing Montague from prison, by promoting him to a royal chaplaincy, and by levying the disputed customs without authority of law. "England," cried Sir Thomas Philips, "is the last monarchy that yet retains her liberties. Let them not perish now." But the Commons had no sooner announced their resolve to consider public grievances before entering on other business than they were met in August by a dissolution.

The descent on Cadiz.

To the shallow temper of Buckingham the cautious firmness of the Commons seemed simply the natural discontent which follows on ill success. If he dissolved the Houses, it was in the full belief that their constitutional demands could be lulled by a military triumph. His hands were no sooner free than he sailed for the Hague to conclude a general alliance against the House of Austria, while a fleet of ninety vessels and ten thousand soldiers left Plymouth in October for the coast of Spain. But these vast projects broke down before Buckingham's administrative incapacity. The plan of alliance proved fruitless. After an idle descent on Cadiz the Spanish expedition returned broken with mutiny and disease; and the

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enormous debt which had been incurred in its equipment forced the favourite to advise a new summons of the Houses in the coming year. But he was keenly alive to the peril in which his failure had plunged him, and to a coalition which had been formed between his rivals at Court and the leaders of the last Parliament. The older nobles looked to his ruin to restore the power of the Council; and in this the leaders of the Commons went with them. Buckingham's reckless daring led him to anticipate the danger by a series of blows which should strike terror into his opponents. The Councillors were humbled by the committal of Lord Arundel to the Tower. Sir Richard Philips, Coke, and four other leading patriots were made sheriffs of their counties, and thus prevented from sitting in the coming Parliament.

Eliot.

But their exclusion only left the field free for a more terrible foe. If Hampden and Pym are the great figures which embody the later national resistance, the earlier struggle for Parliamentary liberty centres in the figure of Sir John Eliot. Of an old family which had settled under Elizabeth near the fishing hamlet of St. Germains, and whose stately mansion gives its name of Port Eliot to a little town on the Tamar, he had risen to the post of Vice-Admiral of Devonshire under the patronage of Buckingham, and had seen his activity in the suppression of piracy in the Channel rewarded by an unjust imprisonment. He was now in the first vigour of manhood, with a mind exquisitely cultivated and familiar with the poetry and learning of his day, a nature singularly lofty and devout, a fearless and vehement temper. There was a hot impulsive element in his nature which showed itself in youth in his drawing sword on a neighbour who denounced him to his father, and which in later years gave its characteristic fire to his eloquence. But his intellect was as clear and cool as his temper was ardent. What he believed in was the English Parliament. He saw in it the collective wisdom of the realm; and in that wisdom he

put a firmer trust than in the state-craft of kings. In the general enthusiasm which followed on the failure of the Spanish marriage, Eliot had stood almost alone in pressing for a recognition of the rights of Parliament as a preliminary to any real reconciliation with the Crown. He fixed, from the very outset of his career, on the responsibility of the royal ministers to Parliament as the one critical point for English liberty.

The Parliament of 1626.

It was to enforce the demand of this that he availed himself of Buckingham's sacrifice of the Treasurer, Cranfield, to the resentment of the Commons. "The greater the delinquent," he urged, "the greater the delict. They are a happy thing, great men and officers, if they be good, and one of the greatest blessings of the land: but power converted into evil is the greatest curse that can befall it." But the Parliament of 1626 had hardly met when Eliot came to the front to threaten a greater criminal than Cranfield. So menacing were his words, as he called for an enquiry into the failure before Cadiz, that Charles himself stooped to answer threat with threat. "I see," he wrote to the House, "you especially aim at the Duke of Buckingham. I must let you know that I will not allow any of my servants to be questioned among you, much less such as are of eminent place and near to me." A more direct attack on a right already acknowledged in the impeachment of Bacon and Cranfield could hardly be imagined, but Eliot refused to move from his constitutional ground. The King was by law irresponsible, he "could do no wrong." If the country therefore was to be saved from a pure despotism, it must be by enforcing the responsibility of the ministers who counselled and executed his acts. Eliot persisted in denouncing Buckingham's incompetence and corruption, and the Commons ordered the subsidy which the Crown had demanded to be brought in "when we shall have presented our grievances, and received his Majesty's answer thereto." Charles summoned them to Whitehall, and commanded them to cancel the

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condition. He would grant them "liberty of counsel, but not of control;" and he closed the interview with a significant threat. "Remember," he said, "that Parliaments are altogether in my power for their calling, sitting, and dissolution: and therefore, as I find the fruits of them to be good or evil, they are to continue or not to be." But the will of the Commons was as resolute as the will of the King. Buckingham's impeachment was voted and carried to the Lords.

Impeachment of Buckingham.

The favourite took his seat as a peer to listen to the charge with so insolent an air of contempt that one of the managers appointed by the Commons to conduct it turned sharply on him. "Do you jeer, my Lord!" said Sir Dudley Digges. "I can show you when a greater man than your Lordship—as high as you in place and power, and as deep in the King's favour—has been hanged for as small a crime as these articles contain." But his arrogance raised a more terrible foe than Sir Dudley Digges. The "proud carriage" of the Duke provoked an attack from Eliot which marks a new era in Parliamentary speech. From the first the vehemence and passion of his words had contrasted with the grave, colourless reasoning of older speakers. His opponents complained that Eliot aimed to "stir up affections." The quick emphatic sentences he substituted for the cumbrous periods of the day, his rapid argument, his vivacious and caustic allusions, his passionate appeals, his fearless invective, struck a new note in English eloquence. The frivolous ostentation of Buckingham, his very figure blazing with jewels and gold, gave point to the fierce attack. "He has broken those nerves and sinews of our land, the stores and treasures of the King. There needs no search for it. It is too visible. His profuse expenses, his superfluous feasts, his magnificent buildings, his riots, his excesses, what are they but the visible evidences of an express exhausting of the state, a chronicle of the immensity of his waste of the revenues of the Crown?" With the same terrible directness Eliot reviewed the

Duke's greed and corruption, his insatiate ambition, his seizure of all public authority, his neglect of every public duty, his abuse for selfish ends of the powers he had accumulated. "The pleasure of his Majesty, his known directions, his public acts, his acts of council, the decrees of courts—all must be made inferior to this man's will. No right, no interest may withstand him. Through the power of state and justice he has dared ever to strike at his own ends." "My Lords," he ended, after a vivid parallel between Buckingham and Sejanus, "you see the man! What have been his actions, what he is like, you know! I leave him to your judgement. This only is conceived by us, the knights, citizens, and burgesses of the Commons House of Parliament, that by him came all our evils, in him we find the causes, and on him must be the remedies! Pereat qui perdere cuncta festinat! Opprimatur ne omnes opprimat!"

Dissolution of the Parliament.

In calling for Buckingham's removal the Houses were but exercizing a right or a duty which was inherent in their very character of counsellors of the Crown. There had never been a time from the earliest days of the English Parliament when it had not called for the dismissal of evil advisers. What had in older time been done by risings of the baronage had been done since the Houses gathered at Westminster by their protests as representatives of the realm. They were far from having dreamed as yet of the right which Parliament exercizes to-day of naming the royal ministers, nor had they any wish to meddle with the common administration of government. It was only in exceptional instances of evil counsel, when some favourite like Buckingham broke the union of the nation and the King, that they demanded a change. To Charles however their demand seemed a claim to usurp his sovereignty. His reply was as fierce and sudden as the attack of Eliot. He hurried to the House of Peers to avow as his own the deeds with which Buckingham was charged; while Eliot and Digges were called from their seats and

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committed prisoners to the Tower. The Commons however refused to proceed with public business till their members were restored; and after a ten-days' struggle Eliot was released. But his release was only a prelude to the close of the Parliament. "Not one moment," the King replied to the prayer of his Council for delay; and a final remonstrance in which the Commons begged him to dismiss Buckingham from his service for ever was met on the sixteenth of June by their instant dissolution. The remonstrance was burnt by royal order; Eliot was deprived of his Vice-Admiralty; and on the old pretext alleged by James for evading the law, the pretext that what it forbade was the demand of forced gifts and not of voluntary loans to the Crown, the subsidies which the Parliament had refused to grant till their grievances were redressed were levied in the arbitrary form of benevolences.

The Forced Loan.

But the tide of public resistance was slowly rising. Refusals to give anything "save by way of Parliament" came in from county after county. When the subsidy-men of Middlesex and Westminster were urged to comply, they answered with a tumultuous shout of "a Parliament! a Parliament! else no subsidies!" Kent stood out to a man. In Bucks the very justices neglected to ask for the "free gift." The freeholders of Cornwall only answered that, "if they had but two kine, they would sell one of them for supply to his Majesty—in a Parliamentary way." The failure of the voluntary benevolence forced Charles to pass from evasion into open defiance of the law. He met it in 1627 by the levy of a forced loan. It was in vain that Chief Justice Crewe refused to acknowledge that such loans were legal. The law was again trampled under foot, as in the case of his predecessor, Coke; and Crewe was dismissed from his post. Commissioners were named to assess the amount which every landowner was bound to lend, and to examine on oath all who refused. Every means of persuasion, as of force, was resorted to. The pulpits of the Laudian

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clergy resounded with the cry of "passive obedience." Dr. Mainwaring preached before Charles himself, that the King needed no Parliamentary warrant for taxation, and that to resist his will was to incur eternal damnation. Soldiers were quartered on recalcitrant boroughs. Poor men who refused to lend were pressed into the army or navy. Stubborn tradesmen were flung into prison. Buckingham himself undertook the task of overawing the nobles and the gentry. Among the bishops, the Primate and Bishop Williams of Lincoln alone resisted the King's will. The first was suspended on a frivolous pretext, and the second was disgraced. But in the country at large resistance was universal. The northern counties in a mass set the Crown at defiance. The Lincolnshire farmers drove the Commissioners from the town. Shropshire, Devon, and Warwickshire "refused utterly." Eight peers, with Lord Essex and Lord Warwick at their head, declined to comply with the exaction as illegal. Two hundred country gentlemen, whose obstinacy had not been subdued by their transfer from prison to prison, were summoned before the Council; and John Hampden, as yet only a young Buckinghamshire squire, appeared at the board to begin that career of patriotism which has made his name dear to Englishmen. "I could be content to lend," he said, "but fear to draw on myself that curse in Magna Charta, which should be read twice a year against those who infringe it." So close an imprisonment in the Gate House rewarded his protest "that he never afterwards did look like the same man he was before."

Charles and France.

The fierce energy with which Buckingham pressed the forced loan was no mere impulse of angry tyranny. Never was money so needed by the Crown. The blustering and blundering of the favourite had at last succeeded in plunging him into war with his own allies. England had been told that the friendship of France, a friendship secured by the King's marriage with a French princess, was the basis on which Charles was building up his great European alliance against Spain. She now suddenly found

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herself at war with Spain and France together. The steps by which this result had been brought about throw an amusing light on the capacity of the young King and his minister. The occupation of the Palatinate had forced France to provide for its own safety. Spain already fronted her along the Pyrenees and the border of the Netherlands; if the Palatinate was added to the Spanish possession of Franche-Comté, it would close France in on the east as well the north and the south. War therefore was being forced on the French monarchy when Charles and Buckingham sought its alliance against Spain; and nothing hindered an outbreak of hostilities but a revolt of the Protestant town of Rochelle. Lewis the Thirteenth pleaded the impossibility of engaging in such a struggle so long as the Huguenots could rise in his rear; and he called on England to help him by lending ships to blockade Rochelle into submission in time for action in the spring of 1625. The Prince and Buckingham brought James to assent; but Charles had no sooner mounted the throne than he shrank from sending ships against a Protestant city, and secretly instigated the crews to mutiny against their captains on an order to sail. The vessels, it was trusted, would then arrive too late to take part in the siege. Unluckily for this intrigue they arrived to find the city still in arms, and it was the appearance of English ships among their enemies which forced the men of Rochelle to submit. While Englishmen were angered by the use of English vessels against Protestantism, France resented the King's attempt to evade his pledge. Its Court resented yet more the hesitation which Charles showed in face of his Parliament in fulfilling the promise he had given in the marriage-treaty of tolerating Catholic worship; and its resentment was embittered by an expulsion from the realm of the French attendants on the new Queen, a step to which Charles was at last driven by their insolence and intrigues. On the other hand, French statesmen were offended by the seizure of French ships charged with carrying materials of war to the Spaniards, and by an attempt of the English

sovereign to atone for his past attack on Rochelle by constituting himself mediator of a peace on behalf of the Huguenots.

The siege of Rochelle.

But though grounds of quarrel multiplied every day, the French minister, Richelieu, had no mind for strife. He was now master of the Catholic faction which had fed the dispute between the Crown and the Huguenots with the aim of bringing about a reconciliation with Spain; he saw that in the European conflict which lay before him the friendship or the neutrality of England were all but essential; and though he gathered a fleet in the Channel and took a high tone of remonstrance, he strove by concession after concession to avert war. But on war Buckingham was resolved. Of policy in any true sense of the word the favourite knew nothing; for the real interest of England or the balance of Europe he cared little; what he saw before him was the chance of a blow at a power he had come to hate, and the chance of a war which would make him popular at home. The mediation of Charles in favour of Rochelle had convinced Richelieu that the complete reduction of that city was a necessary prelude to any effective intervention in Germany. If Lewis was to be master abroad, he must first be master at home. But it was hard for lookers-on to read the Cardinal's mind or to guess with what a purpose he resolved to exact submission from the Huguenots. In England, where the danger of Rochelle seemed a fresh part of the Catholic attack upon Protestantism throughout the world, the enthusiasm for the Huguenots was intense; and Buckingham resolved to take advantage of this enthusiasm to secure such a triumph for the royal arms as should silence all opposition at home. It was for this purpose that the forced loan was pushed on; and in July 1627 a fleet of a hundred vessels sailed under Buckingham's command for the relief of Rochelle. But imposing as was his force, Buckingham showed himself as incapable a soldier as he had proved a statesman. The troops were landed on the Isle of Rhé, in front of the

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harbour; but after a useless siege of the Castle of St. Martin, the English soldiers were forced in October to fall back along a narrow causeway to their ships, and two thousand fell in the retreat without the loss of a single man to their enemies.

The Parliament of 1628.

The first result of the failure at Rhé was the summoning of a new Parliament. Overwhelmed as he was with debt and shame, Charles was forced to call the Houses together again in the spring of 1628. The elections promised ill for the Court. Its candidates were everywhere rejected. The patriot leaders were triumphantly returned. To have suffered in the recent resistance to arbitrary taxation was the sure road to a seat. It was this question which absorbed all others in men's minds. Even Buckingham's removal was of less moment than the redress of personal wrongs; and some of the chief leaders of the Commons had not hesitated to bring Charles to consent to summon Parliament by promising to abstain from attacks on Buckingham. Against such a resolve Eliot protested in vain. But on the question of personal liberty the tone of the Commons when they met in March was as vehement as that of Eliot. "We must vindicate our ancient liberties," said Sir Thomas Wentworth in words soon to be remembered against himself: "we must reinforce the laws made by our ancestors. We must set such a stamp upon them, as no licentious spirit shall dare hereafter to invade them." Heedless of sharp and menacing messages from the King, of demands that they should take his "royal word" for their liberties, the House bent itself to one great work, the drawing up a Petition of Right. The statutes that protected the subject against arbitrary taxation, against loans and benevolences, against punishment, outlawry, or deprivation of goods, otherwise than by lawful judgement of his peers, against arbitrary imprisonment without stated charge, against billeting of soldiery on the people or enactment of martial law in time of peace, were formally recited. The breaches

of them under the last two sovereigns, and above all since the dissolution of the last Parliament, were recited as formally. At the close of this significant list, the Commons prayed "that no man hereafter be compelled to make or yield any gift, loan, benevolence, tax, or such like charge, without common consent by Act of Parliament. And that none be called to make answer, or to take such oaths, or to be confined or otherwise molested or disputed concerning the same, or for refusal thereof. And that no freeman may in such manner as is before mentioned be imprisoned or detained. And that your Majesty would be pleased to remove the said soldiers and mariners, and that your people may not be so burthened in time to come. And that the commissions for proceeding by martial law may be revoked and annulled, and that hereafter no commissions of like nature may issue forth to any person or persons whatsoever to be executed as aforesaid, lest by colour of them any of your Majesty's subjects be destroyed and put to death, contrary to the laws and franchises of the land. All which they humbly pray of your most excellent Majesty, as their rights and liberties, according to the laws and statutes of the realm. And that your Majesty would also vouchsafe to declare that the awards, doings, and proceedings to the prejudice of your people in any of the premisses shall not be drawn hereafter into consequence or example. And that your Majesty would be pleased graciously for the further comfort and safety of your people to declare your royal will and pleasure, that in the things aforesaid all your officers and ministers shall serve you according to the laws and statutes of this realm, as they tender the honour of your Majesty and the prosperity of the kingdom."

The Petition of Right

It was in vain that the Lords strove to conciliate Charles by a reservation of his "sovereign power." "Our petition," Pym quietly replied, "is for the laws of England, and this power seems to be another power distinct from the power of the law." The Lords yielded, but Charles gave an

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evasive reply; and the failure of the more moderate counsels for which his own had been set aside, called Eliot again to the front. In a speech of unprecedented boldness he moved the presentation to the King of a Remonstrance on the state of the realm. But at the moment when he again touched on Buckingham's removal as the preliminary of any real improvement the Speaker of the House interposed. "There was a command laid on him," he said, "to interrupt any that should go about to lay an aspersion on the King's ministers." The breach of their privilege of free speech produced a scene in the Commons such as St. Stephen's had never witnessed before. Eliot sate abruptly down amidst the solemn silence of the House. "Then appeared such a spectacle of passions," says a letter of the time, "as the like had seldom been seen in such an assembly: some weeping, some expostulating, some prophesying of the fatal ruin of our kingdom, some playing the divines in confessing their sins and country's sins which drew these judgements upon us, some finding, as it were, fault with those that wept. There were above an hundred weeping eyes, many who offered to speak being interrupted and silenced by their own passions." Pym himself rose only to sit down choked with tears. At last Sir Edward Coke found words to blame himself for the timid counsels which had checked Eliot at the beginning of the Session, and to protest "that the author and source of all those miseries was the Duke of Buckingham." Shouts of assent greeted the resolution to insert the Duke's name in their Remonstrance. But at this moment the King's obstinacy gave way. A fresh expedition, which had been sent to Rochelle, returned unsuccessful; and if the siege was to be raised far greater and costlier efforts must be made. And that the siege should be raised Buckingham was still resolved. All his energies were now enlisted in this project; and to get supplies for his fleet he bent the King to consent in June to the Petition of Right. As Charles understood it, indeed, the consent meant little. The one

point for which he really cared was the power of keeping men in prison without bringing them to trial or assigning causes for their imprisonment. On this he had consulted his judges; and they had answered that his consent to the Petition left his rights untouched; like other laws, they said, the Petition would have to be interpreted when it came before them, and the prerogative remained unaffected. As to the rest, while waiving all claim to levy taxes not granted by Parliament, Charles still reserved his right to levy impositions paid customarily to the Crown, and amongst these he counted tonnage and poundage. Of these reserves however the Commons knew nothing. The King's consent won a grant of subsidy, and such a ringing of bells and lighting of bonfires from the people "as were never seen but upon his Majesty's return from Spain."

Death of Buckingham

But, like all the King's concessions, it came too late to effect the end at which he aimed. The Commons persisted in presenting their Remonstrance. Charles received it coldly and ungraciously; while Buckingham, who had stood defiantly at his master's side as he was denounced, fell on his knees to speak. "No, George!" said the King as he raised him; and his demeanour gave emphatic proof that the Duke's favour remained undiminished. "We will perish together, George," he added at a later time, "if thou dost." He had in fact got the subsidies which he needed; and it was easy to arrest all proceedings against Buckingham by proroguing Parliament at the close of June. The Duke himself cared little for a danger which he counted on drowning in the blaze of a speedy triumph. He had again gathered a strong fleet and a fine body of men, and his ardent fancy already saw the harbour of Rochelle forced and the city relieved. No shadow of his doom had fallen over the brilliant favourite when he set out in August to take command of the expedition. But a lieutenant in the army, John Felton, soured by neglect and wrongs, had found in the Remonstrance some imaginary sanction for the revenge he plotted; and, mixing with the

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throng which crowded the hall at Portsmouth, he stabbed Buckingham to the heart. Charles flung himself on his bed in a passion of tears when the news reached him; but outside the Court it was welcomed with a burst of joy. Young Oxford bachelors, grave London Aldermen, vied with each other in drinking healths to Felton. "God bless thee, little David," cried an old woman, as the murderer passed manacled by; "the Lord comfort thee," shouted the crowd, as the Tower gates closed on him. The very forces in the Duke's armament at Portsmouth shouted to the King, as he witnessed their departure, a prayer that he would "spare John Felton, their sometime fellow soldier." But whatever national hopes the fall of Buckingham had aroused were quickly dispelled. Weston, a creature of the Duke, became Lord Treasurer, and his system remained unchanged. "Though our Achan is cut off," said Eliot, "the accursed thing remains."

The Laudian Clergy.

It seemed as if no act of Charles could widen the breach which his reckless lawlessness had made between himself and his subjects. But there was one thing dearer to England then free speech in Parliament, than security for property, or even personal liberty; and that one thing was, in the phrase of the day, "the Gospel." The gloom which at the outset of this reign we saw settling down on every Puritan heart had deepened with each succeeding year. The great struggle abroad had gone more and more against Protestantism, and at this moment the end of the cause seemed to have come. In Germany Lutheran and Calvinist alike lay at last beneath the heel of the Catholic House of Austria. The fall of Rochelle, which followed quick on the death of Buckingham, seemed to leave the Huguenots of France at the feet of a Roman Cardinal. In such a time as this, while England was thrilling with excitement at the thought that her own hour of deadly peril might come again, as it had come in the year of the Armada, the Puritans saw with horror the quick growth of Arminianism at home. Laud was now Bishop of London as well as the

practical administrator of Church affairs, and to the excited Protestantism of the country Laud and the Churchmen whom he headed seemed a danger more really formidable than the Popery which was making such mighty strides abroad. To the Puritans they were traitors, traitors to God and their country at once. Their aim was to draw the Church of England farther away from the Protestant Churches, and nearer to the Church which Protestants regarded as Babylon. They aped Roman ceremonies. Cautiously and tentatively they were introducing Roman doctrine. But they had none of the sacerdotal independence which Rome had at any rate preserved. They were abject in their dependence on the Crown. Their gratitude for the royal protection which enabled them to defy the religious instincts of the realm showed itself in their erection of the most dangerous pretensions of the monarchy into religious dogmas. Their model, Bishop Andrewes, had declared James to have been inspired by God. They preached passive obedience to the worst tyranny. They declared the person and goods of the subject to be at the King's absolute disposal. They were turning religion into a systematic attack on English liberty, nor was their attack to be lightly set aside. Up to this time they had been little more than a knot of courtly parsons, for the mass of the clergy, like their flocks, were steady Puritans; but the well-known energy of Laud and the open patronage of the court promised a speedy increase of their numbers and their power. It was significant that upon the prorogation of 1628 Montague had been made a bishop, and Mainwaring, who had called Parliaments ciphers in the state, had been rewarded with a fat living. Instances such as these would hardly be lost on the mass of the clergy, and sober men looked forward to a day when every pulpit would be ringing with exhortations to passive obedience, with denunciations of Calvinism and apologies for Rome.

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Of all the members of the House of Commons Eliot was least fanatical in his natural bent, but the religious crisis

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swept away for the moment all other thoughts from his mind. "Danger enlarges itself in so great a measure," he wrote from the country, "that nothing but Heaven shrouds us from despair." When the Commons met again in January, 1629, they met in Eliot's temper. The first business called up was that of religion. The House refused to consider any question of supplies, or even that of tonnage and poundage, which still remained unsettled though Charles had persisted in levying these duties without any vote of Parliament, till the religious grievance was discussed. "The Gospel," Eliot burst forth, "is that Truth in which this kingdom has been happy through a long and rare prosperity. This ground therefore let us lay for a foundation of our building, that that Truth, not with words, but with actions we will maintain!" "There is a ceremony," he went on, "used in the Eastern Churches, of standing at the repetition of the Creed, to testify their purpose to maintain it, not only with their bodies upright, but with their swords drawn. Give me leave to call that a custom very commendable!" The Commons answered their leader's challenge by a solemn avowal. They avowed that they held for truth that sense of the Articles as established by Parliament, which by the public act of the Church, and the general and current exposition of the writers of their Church, had been delivered unto them. It is easy to regard such an avowal as a mere outburst of Puritan bigotry, and the opposition of Charles as a defence of the freedom of religious thought. But the real importance of the avowal both to King and Commons lay in its political significance. In the mouth of the Commons it was a renewal of the claim that all affairs of the realm, spiritual as well as temporal, were cognizable in Parliament. To Charles it seemed as if the Commons were taking to themselves, in utter defiance of his rights as governor of the Church, "the interpretation of articles of religion; the deciding of which in doctrinal points," to use his own words, "only appertaineth to the

clergy and Convocation." To use more modern phrazes, the King insisted that the nation should receive its creed at the hands of the priesthood and the crown. England in the avowal of Parliament asserted that the right to determine the belief of a nation lay with the nation itself.

Dissolution of the Parliament.

But the debates over religion were suddenly interrupted. In granting the Petition of Right we have seen that Charles had no purpose of parting with his power of arbitrary arrest or of levying customs. Both practices in fact went on as before, and the goods of merchants who refused to pay tonnage and poundage were seized as of old. At the re-opening of the Session indeed the King met the Commons with a proposal that they should grant him tonnage and poundage and pass silently over what had been done by his officers. But the House was far from assenting to the interpretation which Charles had put on the Petition, and it was resolved to vindicate what it held to be the law. It deferred all grant of customs till the wrong done in the illegal levy of them was redressed, and summoned the farmers of those dues to the bar. But though they appeared, they pleaded the King's command as a ground for their refusal to answer. The House was proceeding to a protest, when on the second of March the Speaker signified that he had received an order to adjourn. Dissolution was clearly at hand, and the long-suppressed indignation broke out in a scene of strange disorder. The Speaker was held down in the chair, while Eliot, still clinging to his great principle of ministerial responsibility, denounced the new Treasurer as the adviser of the measure. "None have gone about to break Parliaments," he added in words to which after events gave a terrible significance, "but in the end Parliaments have broken them." The doors were locked, and in spite of the Speaker's protests, of the repeated knocking of the usher at the door, and the gathering tumult within the House itself, the loud "Aye, Aye!" of the bulk of the members supported Eliot in his last vindication of English

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liberty. By successive resolutions the Commons declared whosoever should bring in innovations in religion, or whatever minister endorsed the levy of subsidies not granted in Parliament, "a capital enemy to the kingdom and commonwealth," and every subject voluntarily complying with illegal acts and demands "a betrayer of the liberty of England and an enemy of the same."

CHAPTER VI.

THE PERSONAL GOVERNMENT.

1629—1635.

The policy of Charles.

AT the opening of his third Parliament Charles had hinted in ominous words that the continuance of Parliament at all depended on its compliance with his will. "If you do not your duty," said the King, "mine would then order me to use those other means which God has put into my hand." When the threat failed to break the resistance of the Commons the ominous words passed into a settled policy. "We have showed," said a proclamation which followed on the dissolution of the Houses, on the tenth of March, "by our frequent meeting our people our love to the use of Parliament. Yet the late abuse having for the present drawn us unwillingly out of that course, we shall account it presumption for any to prescribe any time unto us for Parliament."

No Parliament in fact met for eleven years. But it would be unfair to charge the King at the outset of this period with any definite scheme of establishing a tyranny, or of changing what he conceived to be the older constitution of the realm. He "hated the very name of Parliaments;" but in spite of his hate he had as yet no purpose of abolishing them. His belief was that England would in time recover its senses, and that then Parliament might reassemble without inconvenience to the Crown. In the interval, however long it might be, he proposed to govern single-handed by the use of "those means which God had put into his hands." Resistance indeed he was resolved

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to put down. The leaders of the country party in the last Parliament were thrown into prison; and Eliot died, the first martyr of English liberty, in the Tower. Men were forbidden to speak of the re-assembling of a Parliament. But here the King stopped. The opportunity which might have suggested dreams of organized despotism to a Richelieu suggested only means of filling his exchequer to Charles. He had in truth neither the grander nor the meaner instincts of a born tyrant. He did not seek to gain an absolute power over his people, because he believed that his absolute power was already a part of the constitution of the country. He set up no standing army to secure it, partly because he was poor, but yet more because his faith in his position was such that he never dreamed of any effectual resistance. He believed implicitly in his own prerogative, and he never doubted that his subjects would in the end come to believe in it too. His system rested not on force, but on a moral basis, on an appeal from opinion ill-informed to opinion, as he looked on it, better-informed. What he relied on was not the soldier, but the judge. It was for the judges to show from time to time the legality of his claims, and for England at last to bow to the force of conviction.

Peace.

He was resolute indeed to free the Crown from its dependence on Parliament; but his expedients for freeing the Crown from a dependence against which his pride as a sovereign revolted were simply peace and economy. With France an accommodation had been brought about in 1629 by the fall of Rochelle. The terms which Richelieu granted to the defeated Huguenots showed the real drift of his policy; and the reconciliation of the two countries set the King's hands free to aid Germany in her hour of despair. The doom of the Lutheran princes of the north had followed hard on the ruin of the Calvinistic princes of the south. The selfish neutrality of Saxony and Brandenburg received a fitting punishment in their

helplessness before the triumphant advance of the Emperor's troops. His general, Wallenstein, encamped on the Baltic; and the last hopes of German Protestantism lay in the resistance of Stralsund. The danger called the Scandinavian powers to its aid. Denmark and Sweden leagued to resist Wallenstein; and Charles sent a squadron to the Elbe while he called on Holland to join in a quadruple alliance against the Emperor. Richelieu promised to support the alliance with a fleet: and even the withdrawal of Denmark, bribed into neutrality by the restitution of her possessions on the mainland, left the force of the league an imposing one. Gustavus of Sweden remained firm in his purpose of entering Germany, and appealed for aid to both England and France. But at this moment the dissolution of the Parliament left Charles penniless. He at once resolved on a policy of peace, refused aid to Gustavus, withdrew his ships from the Baltic, and opened negotiations with Spain, which brought about a treaty at the end of 1630 on the virtual basis of an abandonment of the Palatinate. Ill luck clung to Charles in peace as in war. He had withdrawn from his efforts to win back the dominions of his brother-in-law at the very moment when those efforts were about to be crowned with success. The treaty with Spain was hardly concluded when Gustavus landed in Germany and began his wonderful career of victory. Charles at once strove to profit by his success; and in 1631 he suffered the Marquis of Hamilton to join the Swedish king with a force of Scotch and English regiments. After some service in Silesia, this force aided in the battle of Breitenfeld and followed Gustavus in his reconquest of the Palatinate. But the conqueror demanded, as the price of its restoration to Frederick, that Charles should again declare war upon Spain; and this was a price that the King would not pay. The danger in Germany was over; the power of France and of Holland threatened the supremacy of England on the seas; and even had these reasons not swayed him to

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friendship with Spain, Charles was stubborn not to plunge into a combat which would again force him to summon a Parliament.

Financial measures.

What absorbed his attention at home was the question of the revenue. The debt was a large one; and the ordinary income of the Crown, unaided by Parliamentary supplies, was inadequate to meet its ordinary expenditure. Charles himself was frugal and laborious; and the economy of Weston, the new Lord Treasurer, whom he raised to the earldom of Portland, contrasted advantageously with the waste and extravagance of the government under Buckingham. But economy failed to close the yawning gulf of the Treasury, and the course into which Charles was driven by the financial pressure showed with how wise a prescience the Commons had fixed on the point of arbitrary taxation as the chief danger to constitutional freedom. It is curious to see to what shifts the royal pride was driven in its effort at once to fill the Exchequer, and yet to avoid, as far as it could, any direct breach of constitutional law in the imposition of taxes by the sole authority of the Crown. The dormant powers of the prerogative were strained to their utmost. The right of the Crown to force knighthood on the landed gentry was revived, in order to squeeze them into composition for the refusal of it. Fines were levied on them for the redress of defects in their title-deeds. A Commission of the Forests exacted large sums from the neighbouring landowners for their encroachments on Crown lands. Three hundred thousand pounds were raised by this means in Essex alone. London, the special object of courtly dislike, on account of its stubborn Puritanism, was brought within the sweep of royal extortion by the enforcement of an illegal proclamation which James had issued, prohibiting its extension. Every house throughout the large suburban districts in which the prohibition had been disregarded was only saved from demolition by the payment of three years' rental to the Crown. The Treasury gained

a hundred thousand pounds by this clever stroke, and Charles gained the bitter enmity of the great city whose strength and resources were fatal to him in the coming war. Though the Catholics were no longer troubled by any active persecution, and the Lord Treasurer was in heart a Papist, the penury of the Exchequer forced the Crown to maintain the old system of fines for "recusancy."

Fines and monopolies

Vexatious measures of extortion such as these were far less hurtful to the state than the conversion of justice into a means of supplying the royal necessities by means of the Star Chamber. The jurisdiction of the King's Council had been revived by Wolsey as a check on the nobles; and it had received great development, especially on the side of criminal law, during the Tudor reigns. Forgery, perjury, riot, maintenance, fraud, libel, and conspiracy, were the chief offences cognizable in this court, but its scope extended to every misdemeanour, and especially to charges where, from the imperfection of the common law, or the power of offenders, justice was baffled in the lower courts. Its process resembled that of Chancery: it usually acted on an information laid before it by the King's Attorney. Both witnesses and accused were examined on oath by special interrogatories, and the Court was at liberty to adjudge any punishment short of death. The possession of such a weapon would have been fatal to liberty under a great tyrant; under Charles it was turned simply to the profit of the Exchequer. Large numbers of cases which would ordinarily have come before the Courts of Common Law were called before the Star Chamber, simply for the purpose of levying fines for the Crown. The same motive accounts for the enormous penalties which were exacted for offences of a trivial character. The marriage of a gentleman with his niece was punished by the forfeiture of twelve thousand pounds, and fines of four and five thousand pounds were awarded for brawls between lords of the Court. Fines such as these however affected a smaller range of sufferers than the financial

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expedient to which Weston had recourse in the renewal of monopolies. Monopolies, abandoned by Elizabeth, extinguished by Act of Parliament under James, and denounced with the assent of Charles himself in the Petition of Right, were again set on foot, and on a scale far more gigantic than had been seen before; the companies who undertook them paying a fixed duty on their profits as well as a large sum for the original concession of the monopoly. Wine, soap, salt, and almost every article of domestic consumption fell into the hands of monopolists, and rose in price out of all proportion to the profit gained by the Crown. "They sup in our cup," Colepepper said afterwards in the Long Parliament, "they dip in our dish, they sit by our fire; we find them in the dye-fat, the wash bowls, and the powdering tub. They share with the cutler in his box. They have marked and sealed us from head to foot."

Customs and benevolences.

In spite of the financial expedients we have described the Treasury would have remained unfilled had not the King persisted in those financial measures which had called forth the protest of the Parliament. The exaction of customs duties went on as of old at the ports. The resistance of the London merchants to their payment was roughly put down by the Star Chamber; and an alderman who complained bitterly that men were worse off in England than in Turkey was ruined by a fine of two thousand pounds. Writs for benevolences, under the old pretext of loans, were issued for every shire. But the freeholders of the counties were more difficult to deal with than London aldermen. When those of Cornwall were called together at Bodmin to contribute to a voluntary loan, half the hundreds refused, and the yield of the rest came to little more than two thousand pounds. One of the Cornishmen has left an amusing record of the scene which took place before the Commissioners appointed for assessment of the loan. "Some with great words and threatenings, some with persuasions," he says, "were drawn to it. I was like to have

been complimented out of my money; but knowing with whom I had to deal, I held, when I talked with them, my hands fast in my pockets."

General prosperity.

By means such as these the financial difficulty was in some measure met. During Weston's five years of office the debt, which had mounted to sixteen hundred thousand pounds, was reduced by one half. On the other hand the annual revenue of the Crown was raised from half a million to eight hundred thousand. Nor was there much sign of active discontent. Vexatious indeed and illegal as were the proceedings of the Crown, there seems in these earlier years of personal rule to have been little apprehension of any permanent danger to freedom in the country at large. To those who read the letters of the time there is something inexpressibly touching in the general faith of their writers in the ultimate victory of the Law. Charles was obstinate, but obstinacy was too common a foible amongst Englishmen to rouse any vehement resentment. The people were as stubborn as their King, and their political sense told them that the slightest disturbance of affairs must shake down the financial fabric which Charles was slowly building up, and force him back on subsidies and a Parliament. Meanwhile they would wait for better days, and their patience was aided by the general prosperity of the country. The great Continental wars threw wealth into English hands. The intercourse between Spain and Flanders was carried on solely in English ships, and the English flag covered the intercourse of Portugal with its colonies in Africa, India, and the Pacific. The long peace was producing its inevitable results in an extension of commerce and a rise of manufactures in the towns of the West Riding of Yorkshire. Fresh land was being brought into cultivation, and a great scheme was set on foot for reclaiming the Fens. The new wealth of the country gentry, through the increase of rent, was seen in the splendour of the houses which they were raising. The contrast of this peace and prosperity with the ruin and bloodshed of the

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Continent afforded a ready argument to the friends of the King's system. So tranquil was the outer appearance of the country that in Court circles all sense of danger had disappeared. "Some of the greatest statesmen and privy councillors," says May, "would ordinarily laugh when the word, 'liberty of the subject,' was named." There were courtiers bold enough to express their hope that "the King would never need any more Parliaments."

Wentworth.

But beneath this outer calm "the country," Clarendon honestly tells us while eulogizing the Peace, "was full of pride and mutiny and discontent." Thousands were quitting England for America. The gentry held aloof from the Court. "The common people in the generality and the country freeholders would rationally argue of their own rights and the oppressions which were laid upon them." If Charles was content to deceive himself, there was one man among his ministers who saw that the people were right in their policy of patience, and that unless other measures were taken the fabric of despotism would fall at the first breath of adverse fortune. Sir Thomas Wentworth, a great Yorkshire landowner and one of the representatives of his county in Parliament, had stood during the Parliament of 1628 among the more prominent members of the Country party in the Commons. But he was no Eliot. He had no faith in Parliaments, save as means of checking exceptional misgovernment. He had no belief in the general wisdom of the realm, or in its value, when represented by the Commons, as a means of bringing about good government. Powerful as his mind was, it was arrogant and contemptuous; he knew his own capacity for rule, and he looked with scorn on the powers or wits of meaner men. He was a born administrator; and, like Bacon, he panted for an opportunity of displaying his talent in what then seemed the only sphere of political action. From the first moment of his appearance in public his passionate desire had been to find employment in the service of the Crown. At the close of the preceding reign

he was already connected with the Court, he had secured a seat in Yorkshire for one of the royal ministers, and was believed to be on the high road to a peerage. But the consciousness of political ability which spurred his ambition roused the jealousy of Buckingham; and the haughty pride of Wentworth was flung by repeated slights into an attitude of opposition, which his eloquence—grander in its sudden outbursts, though less earnest and sustained than that of Eliot—soon rendered formidable. His intrigues at Court roused Buckingham to crush by a signal insult the rival whose genius he instinctively dreaded. While sitting in his court as sheriff of Yorkshire, Wentworth received the announcement of his dismissal from office and of the gift of his post to Sir John Savile, his rival in the county. "Since they will thus weakly breathe on me a seeming disgrace in the public face of my country," he said with a characteristic outburst of contemptuous pride, "I shall crave leave to wipe it away as openly, as easily!" His whole conception of a strong and able rule revolted against the miserable government of the favourite, his mal-administration at home, his failures and disgraces abroad. Wentworth's aim was to force on the King, not such a freedom as Eliot longed for, but such a system as the Tudors had clung to, where a large and noble policy placed the sovereign naturally at the head of the people, and where Parliaments sank into mere aids to the Crown. But before this could be, Buckingham and the system of blundering misrule that he embodied must be cleared away. It was with this end that Wentworth sprang to the front of the Commons in urging the Petition of Right. Whether in that crisis of his life some nobler impulse, some true passion for the freedom he was to trample under foot, mingled with his thirst for revenge, it is hard to tell. But his words were words of fire. "If he did not faithfully insist for the common liberty of the subject to be preserved whole and entire," it was thus he closed one of his speeches on the Petition, "it was his desire that he

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might be set as a beacon on a hill for all men else to wonder at."

Wentworth as minister.

It is as such a beacon that his name has stood from that time to this. He had shown his powers to good purpose; and at the prorogation of the Parliament he passed into the service of the Crown. He became President of the Council of the North, a court set up in limitation of the common law, and which wielded almost unbounded authority beyond the Humber. In 1629 the death of Buckingham removed the obstacle that stood between his ambition and the end at which it had aimed throughout. All pretence to patriotism was set aside; Wentworth was admitted to the royal Council; and as he took his seat at the board he promised to "vindicate the Monarchy for ever from the conditions and restraints of subjects." So great was the faith in his zeal and power which he knew how to breathe into his royal master that he was at once raised to the peerage, and placed with Laud in the first rank of the King's councillors. Charles had good ground for this rapid confidence in his new minister. In Wentworth the very genius of tyranny was embodied. He soon passed beyond the mere aim of restoring the system of the Tudors. He was far too clear-sighted to share his master's belief that the arbitrary power which Charles was wielding formed any part of the old constitution of the country, or to dream that the mere lapse of time would so change the temper of Englishmen as to reconcile them to despotism. He knew that absolute rule was a new thing in England, and that the only way of permanently establishing it was not by reasoning, or by the force of custom, but by the force of fear. His system was the expression of his own inner temper; and the dark gloomy countenance, the full heavy eye, which meet us in Strafford's portrait are the best commentary on his policy of "Thorough." It was by the sheer strength of his genius, by the terror his violence inspired amid the meaner men whom Buckingham had left, by the general sense of his power, that he had forced himself upon the Court. He had none of the

small arts of a courtier. His air was that of a silent, proud, passionate man; and when he first appeared at Whitehall his rough uncourtly manners provoked a smile in the royal circle. But the smile soon died into a general hate. The Queen, frivolous and meddlesome as she was, detested him; his fellow-ministers intrigued against him, and seized on his hot speeches against the great lords, his quarrels with the royal household, his transports of passion at the very Council-table, to ruin him in his master's favour. The King himself, while steadily supporting him against his rivals, was utterly unable to understand his drift. Charles valued him as an administrator, disdainful of private ends, crushing great and small with the same haughty indifference to men's love or hate, and devoted to the one aim of building up the power of the Crown. But in his purpose of preparing for the great struggle with freedom which he saw before him, of building up by force such a despotism in England as Richelieu was building up in France, and of thus making England as great in Europe as France had been made by Richelieu, he could look for little sympathy and less help from the King.

Ireland under the Stuarts.

Wentworth's genius turned impatiently to a sphere where it could act alone, untrammelled by the hindrances it encountered at home. His purpose was to prepare for the coming contest by the provision of a fixed revenue, arsenals, fortresses, and a standing army, and it was in Ireland that he resolved to find them. Till now this miserable country had been but a drain on the resources of the Crown. Under the administration of Mountjoy's successor, Sir Arthur Chichester, an able and determined effort had been made for the settlement of the conquered province by the general introduction of a purely English system of government, justice, and property. Every vestige of the old Celtic constitution of the country was rejected as "barbarous." The tribal authority of the chiefs was taken from them by law. They were reduced to the position of great nobles and landowners, while their tribesmen rose from subjects

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into tenants, owing only fixed and customary dues and services to their lords. The tribal system of property in common was set aside, and the communal holdings of the tribesmen turned into the copyholds of English law. In the same way the chieftains were stripped of their hereditary jurisdiction, and the English system of judges and trial by jury substituted for their proceedings under Brehon or customary law. To all these changes the Celts opposed the tenacious obstinacy of their race. Irish juries, then as now, refused to convict. Glad as the tribesmen were to be freed from the arbitrary exactions of their chiefs, they held them for chieftains still. The attempt made by Chichester, under pressure from England, to introduce the English uniformity of religion ended in utter failure; for the Englishry of the Pale remained as Catholic as the native Irishry; and the sole result of the measure was to build up a new Irish people out of both on the common basis of religion. Much however had been done by the firm yet moderate government of the Deputy, and signs were already appearing of a disposition on the part of the people to conform gradually to the new usages, when the English Council under James suddenly resolved upon and carried through the revolutionary measure which is known as the Colonization of Ulster. In 1610 the pacific and conservative policy of Chichester was abandoned for a vast policy of spoliation. Two-thirds of the north of Ireland was declared to have been confiscated to the Crown by the part that its possessors had taken in a recent effort at revolt; and the lands which were thus gained were allotted to new settlers of Scotch and English extraction. In its material results the Plantation of Ulster was undoubtedly a brilliant success. Farms and homesteads, churches and mills, rose fast amidst the desolate wilds of Tyrone. The Corporation of London undertook the colonization of Derry, and gave to the little town the name which its heroic defence has made so famous. The foundations of the economic prosperity which has raised Ulster high above the

rest of Ireland in wealth and intelligence were undoubtedly laid in the confiscation of 1610. Nor did the measure meet with any opposition at the time save that of secret discontent. The evicted natives withdrew sullenly to the lands which had been left them by the spoiler, but all faith in English justice had been torn from the minds of the Irishry, and the seed had been sown of that fatal harvest of distrust and disaffection which was to be reaped through tyranny and massacre in the age to come.

Wentworth in Ireland.

But the bitter memories of conquest and spoliation only pointed out Ireland to Wentworth as the best field for his experiment. The balance of Catholic against Protestant might be used to make both parties dependent on the royal authority; the rights of conquest which in Wentworth's theory vested the whole land in the absolute possession of the Crown gave him scope for his administrative ability; and for the rest he trusted, and trusted justly, to the force of his genius and of his will. In the summer of 1633 he sailed as Lord Deputy to Ireland, and five years later his aim seemed almost realized. "The King," he wrote to Laud, "is as absolute here as any prince in the world can be." The government of the new deputy indeed was a rule of terror. Archbishop Usher, with almost every name which we can respect in the island, was the object of his insult and oppression. His tyranny strode over all legal bounds. Wentworth is the one English statesman of all time who may be said to have had no sense of law; and his scorn of it showed itself in his coercion of juries as of parliaments. The highest of the Irish nobles learned to tremble when a few insolent words, construed as mutiny, were enough to bring Lord Mountnorris before a council of war, and to inflict on him a sentence of death. But his tyranny aimed at public ends, and in Ireland the heavy hand of a single despot delivered the mass of the people at any rate from the local despotism of a hundred masters. The Irish landowners were for the first time made to feel themselves amenable to the law. Justice was enforced,

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outrage was repressed, the condition of the clergy was to some extent raised, the sea was cleared of the pirates who infested it. The foundation of the linen manufacture which was to bring wealth to Ulster, and the first development of Irish commerce, date from the Lieutenancy of Wentworth. Good government however was only a means with him for further ends. The noblest work to be done in Ireland was the bringing about a reconciliation between Catholic and Protestant, and an obliteration of the anger and thirst for vengeance which had been raised by the Ulster Plantation. Wentworth, on the other hand, angered the Protestants by a toleration of Catholic worship and a suspension of the persecution which had feebly begun against the priesthood, while he fed the irritation of the Catholics by urging in 1635 a new Plantation of Connaught. His purpose was to encourage a disunion which left both parties dependent for support and protection on the Crown. It was a policy which was to end in bringing about the horrors of the Irish revolt, the vengeance of Cromwell, and the long series of atrocities on both sides which make the story of the country he ruined so terrible to tell. But for the hour it left Ireland helpless in his hands. He doubled the revenue. He raised an army. To provide for its support he ventured, in spite of the panic with which Charles heard of his project, to summon in 1634 an Irish Parliament. His aim was to read a lesson to England and the King by showing how completely that dreaded thing, a Parliament, could be made an organ of the royal will; and his success was complete. The task of overawing an Irish Parliament indeed was no very difficult one. Two-thirds of its House of Commons consisted of the representatives of wretched villages which were pocket-boroughs of the Crown, while absent peers were forced to entrust their proxies to the Council to be used at its pleasure. But precautions were hardly needed. The two Houses trembled at the stern master who bade their members not let the King "find them muttering, or to speak it more truly, mutinying in

corners," and voted with a perfect docility the means of maintaining an army of five thousand foot and five hundred horse. Had the subsidy been refused, the result would have been the same. "I would undertake," wrote Wentworth, "upon the peril of my head, to make the King's army able to subsist and provide for itself among them without their help."

Laud.

While Strafford was thus working out his system of "Thorough" on one side of St. George's Channel, it was being carried out on the other by a mind inferior indeed to his own in genius, but almost equal to it in courage and tenacity. Cold, pedantic, superstitious as he was (he notes in his diary the entry of a robin-redbreast into his study as a matter of grave moment), William Laud rose out of the mass of court-prelates by his industry, his personal unselfishness, his remarkable capacity for administration. At a later period, when immersed in State-business, he found time to acquire so complete a knowledge of commercial affairs that the London merchants themselves owned him a master in matters of trade. Of statesmanship indeed he had none. The shrewdness of James had read the very heart of the man when Buckingham pressed for his first advancement to the see of St. David's. "He hath a restless spirit," said the old King, "which cannot see when things are well, but loves to toss and change, and to bring matters to a pitch of reformation floating in his own brain. Take him with you, but by my soul you will repent it." But Laud's influence was really derived from this oneness of purpose. He directed all the power of a clear, narrow mind and a dogged will to the realization of a single aim. His resolve was to raise the Church of England to what he conceived to be its real position as a branch, though a reformed branch, of the great Catholic Church throughout the world; protesting alike against the innovations of Rome and the innovations of Calvin, and basing its doctrines and usages on those of the Christian communion in the

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centuries which preceded the Council of Nicæa. The first step in the realization of such a theory was the severance of whatever ties had hitherto united the English Church to the Reformed Churches of the Continent. In Laud's view episcopal succession was of the essence of a Church; and by their rejection of bishops the Lutheran and Calvinistic Churches of Germany and Switzerland had ceased to be Churches at all. The freedom of worship therefore which had been allowed to the Huguenot refugees from France, or the Walloons from Flanders, was suddenly withdrawn; and the requirement of conformity with the Anglican ritual drove them in crowds from the southern ports to seek toleration in Holland. The same conformity was required from the English soldiers and merchants abroad, who had hitherto attended without scruple the services of the Calvinistic churches. The English ambassador in Paris was forbidden to visit the Huguenot conventicle at Charenton.

Laud and the Puritans.

As Laud drew further from the Protestants of the Continent, he drew, consciously or unconsciously, nearer to Rome. His theory owned Rome as a true branch of the Church, though severed from that of England by errors and innovations against which the Primate vigorously protested. But with the removal of these obstacles reunion would naturally follow; and his dream was that of bridging over the gulf which ever since the Reformation had parted the two Churches. The secret offer of a cardinal's hat proved Rome's sense that Laud was doing his work for her; while his rejection of it, and his own reiterated protestations, prove equally that he was doing it unconsciously. Union with the great body of Catholicism indeed he regarded as a work which only time could bring about, but for which he could prepare the Church of England by raising it to a higher standard of Catholic feeling and Catholic practice. The great obstacle in his way was the Puritanism of nine-tenths of the English people, and on Puritanism he made war without mercy. Till 1633 indeed his direct range

of action was limited to his own diocese of London, though his influence with the king enabled him in great measure to shape the general course of the government in ecclesiastical matters. But on the death of Abbot Laud was raised to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, and no sooner had his elevation placed him at the head of the English Church, than he turned the High Commission into a standing attack on the Puritan ministers. Rectors and vicars were scolded, suspended, deprived for "Gospel preaching." The use of the surplice, and the ceremonies most offensive to Puritan feeling, were enforced in every parish. The lectures founded in towns, which were the favourite posts of Puritan preachers, were rigorously suppressed. They found a refuge among the country gentlemen, and the Archbishop withdrew from the country gentlemen the privilege of keeping chaplains, which they had till then enjoyed. As parishes became vacant the High Church bishops had long been filling them with men who denounced Calvinism, and declared passive obedience to the sovereign to be part of the law of God. The Puritans felt the stress of this process, and endeavoured to meet it by buying up the appropriations of livings, and securing through feeoffees a succession of Protestant ministers in the parishes of which they were patrons: but in 1633 Laud cited the feeoffees into the Star Chamber, and roughly put an end to them.

Sunday pastimes.

Nor was the persecution confined to the clergy. Under the two last reigns the small pocket-Bibles called the Geneva Bibles had become universally popular amongst English laymen; but their marginal notes were found to savour of Calvinism, and their importation was prohibited. The habit of receiving the communion in a sitting posture had become common, but kneeling was now enforced, and hundreds were excommunicated for refusing to comply with the injunction. A more galling means of annoyance was found in the different views of the two religious parties on the subject of Sunday. The Puritans identified the Lord's day with the Jewish Sabbath, and transferred

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to the one the strict observances which were required for the other. The Laudian clergy, on the other hand, regarded it simply as one among the holidays of the Church, and encouraged their flocks in the pastimes and recreations after service which had been common before the Reformation. The Crown under James had taken part with the latter, and had issued a "Book of Sports" which recommended certain games as lawful and desirable on the Lord's day. The Parliament, as might be expected, was stoutly on the other side, and had forbidden Sunday pastimes by statute. The general religious sense of the country was undoubtedly tending to a stricter observance of the day, when Laud brought the contest to a sudden issue. He summoned the Chief-Justice, Richardson, who had enforced the statute in the western shires, to the Council-table, and rated him so violently that the old man came out complaining he had been all but choked by a pair of lawn sleeves. He then ordered every minister to read the declaration in favour of Sunday pastimes from the pulpit. One Puritan minister had the wit to obey, and to close the reading with the significant hint, "You have heard read, good people, both the commandment of God and the commandment of man! Obey which you please." But the bulk refused to comply with the Archbishop's will. The result followed at which Laud no doubt had aimed. Puritan ministers were cited before the High Commission, and silenced or deprived. In the diocese of Norwich alone thirty parochial clergymen were expelled from their cures.

Laud and the clergy.

The suppression of Puritanism in the ranks of the clergy was only a preliminary to the real work on which the Archbishop's mind was set, the preparation for Catholic reunion by the elevation of the clergy to a Catholic standard in doctrine and ritual. Laud publicly avowed his preference of an unmarried to a married priesthood. Some of the bishops, and a large part of the new clergy who occupied the posts from which the Puritan ministers had been driven, advocated doctrines and customs which

the Reformers had denounced as sheer Papistry; the practice, for instance, of auricular confession, a Real Presence in the Sacrament, or prayers for the dead. One prelate, Montagu, was in heart a convert to Rome. Another, Goodman, died acknowledging himself a Papist. Meanwhile Laud was indefatigable in his efforts to raise the civil and political status of the clergy to the point which it had reached ere the fatal blow of the Reformation fell on the priesthood. Among the archives of his see lies a large and costly volume in vellum, containing a copy of such records in the Tower as concerned the privileges of the clergy. Its compilation was entered in the Archbishop's diary as one among the "twenty-one things which I have projected to do if God bless me in them," and as among the fifteen to which before his fall he had been enabled to add his emphatic "done." The power of the Bishops' Courts, which had long fallen into decay, revived under his patronage. In 1636 he was able to induce the King to raise a prelate, Juxon, Bishop of London, to the highest civil post in the realm, that of Lord High Treasurer. "No Churchman had it since Henry the Seventh's time," Laud comments proudly. "I pray God bless him to carry it so that the Church may have honour, and the State service and content by it. And now, if the Church will not hold up themselves, under God I can do no more."

Laud and ritual.

And as Laud aimed at a more Catholic standard of doctrine in the clergy, so he aimed at a nearer approach to the pomp of Catholicism in public worship. His conduct in his own house at Lambeth brings out with singular vividness the reckless courage with which he threw himself across the religious instincts of a time when the spiritual aspect of worship was overpowering in most minds its æsthetic and devotional sides. Men noted as a fatal omen an accident which marked his first entry into Lambeth; for the overladen ferry-boat upset in the passage of the river, and though the horses and servants were

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saved, the Archbishop's coach remained at the bottom of the Thames. But no omen, carefully as he might note it, brought a moment's hesitation to the bold, narrow mind of the new Primate. His first act, he boasted, was the setting about a restoration of his chapel; and, as Laud managed it, his restoration was a simple undoing of all that had been been done there by his predecessors since the Reformation. With characteristic energy he aided with his own hands in the replacement of the painted glass in its windows, and racked his wits in piecing the fragments together. The glazier was scandalized by the Primate's express command to repair and set up again the "broken crucifix" in the east window. The holy table was removed from the centre, and set altarwise against the eastern wall, with a cloth of arras behind it, on which was embroidered the history of the Last Supper. The elaborate woodwork of the screen, the rich copes of the chaplain, the silver candlesticks, the credence table, the organ and the choir, the stately ritual, the bowings at the sacred name, the genuflexions to the altar made the chapel at last such a model of worship as Laud desired. If he could not exact an equal pomp of devotion in other quarters, he exacted as much as he could. Bowing to the altar was introduced into all cathedral churches. A royal injunction ordered the removal of the communion table, which for the last half-century or more had in almost every parish church stood in the middle of the nave, back to its pre-Reformation position in the chancel, and secured it from profanation by a rail. The removal implied, and was understood to imply, a recognition of the Real Presence, and a denial of the doctrine which Englishmen generally held about the Lord's Supper. But, strenuous as was the resistance which the Archbishop encountered, his pertinacity and severity warred it down. Parsons who denounced the change from their pulpits were fined, imprisoned, and deprived of their benefices. Churchwardens who refused or delayed to obey the injunc-

tion were rated at the Commission-table, and frightened into compliance.

The Puritan panic.

In their last Remonstrance to the King the Commons had denounced Laud as the chief assailant of the Protestant character of the Church of England; and every year of his Primacy showed him bent upon justifying the accusation. His policy was no longer the purely Conservative policy of Parker or Whitgift; it was aggressive and revolutionary. His "new counsels" threw whatever force there was in the feeling of conservatism into the hands of the Puritan, for it was the Puritan who seemed to be defending the old character of the Church of England against its Primate's attacks. But backed as Laud was by the power of the Crown, the struggle became more hopeless every day. While the Catholics owned that they had never enjoyed a like tranquillity, while the fines for recusancy were reduced and their worship suffered to go on in private houses, the Puritan saw his ministers silenced or deprived, his Sabbath profaned, the most sacred act of his worship brought near, as he fancied, to the mass. Roman doctrine met him from the pulpit, Roman practices met him in the Church. It was plain that the purpose of Laud aimed at nothing short of the utter suppression of Puritanism, in other words of the form of religion which was dear to the mass of Englishmen. Already indeed there were signs of a change of temper which might have made a bolder man pause. Thousands of "the best," scholars, merchants, lawyers, farmers, were flying over the Atlantic to seek freedom and purity of religion in the wilderness. Great landowners and nobles were preparing to follow. Ministers were quitting their parsonages rather than abet the royal insult to the sanctity of the Sabbath. The Puritans who remained among the clergy were giving up their homes rather than consent to the change of the sacred table into an altar, or to silence in their protests against the new Popery. The noblest of living Englishmen refused to become the priest of a Church

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whose ministry could only be "bought with servitude and forswearing."

Milton at Horton.

We have seen John Milton leave Cambridge, self-dedicated "to that same lot, however mean or high, to which time leads me and and the will of Heaven." But the lot to which these called him was not the ministerial office to which he had been destined from his childhood. In later life he told bitterly the story how he had been "Church-outed by the prelates." "Coming to some maturity of years, and perceiving what tyranny had invaded in the Church, that he who would take orders must subscribe slave, and take an oath withal, which unless he took with a conscience that would retch he must either straight perjure or split his faith, I thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before the sacred office of speaking, bought and begun with servitude and forswearing." In spite therefore of his father's regrets, he retired in 1633 to a new home which the scrivener had found at Horton, a village in the neighbourhood of Windsor, and quietly busied himself with study and verse. The poetic impulse of the Renascence had been slowly dying away under the Stuarts. The stage was falling into mere coarseness and horror. Shakspere had died quietly at Stratford in Milton's childhood; the last and worst play of Ben Jonson appeared in the year of his settlement at Horton; and though Ford and Massinger still lingered on, there were no successors for them but Shirley and Davenant. The philosophic and meditative taste of the age had produced indeed poetic schools of its own: poetic satire had become fashionable in Hall, better known afterwards as a bishop, and had been carried on vigorously by George Wither; the so-called "metaphysical" poetry, the vigorous and pithy expression of a cold and prosaic good sense, began with Sir John Davies and buried itself in fantastic affectations in Donne; religious verse had become popular in the gloomy allegories of Quarles and the tender refinement which struggles through a jungle of puns and

extravagances in George Herbert. But what poetic life really remained was to be found only in the caressing fancy and lively badinage of lyric singers like Herrick, whose grace is untouched by passion and often disfigured by coarseness and pedantry; or in the school of Spenser's more direct successors, where Browne in his pastorals and the two Fletchers, Phineas and Giles, in their unreadable allegories, still preserved something of their master's sweetness, if they preserved nothing of his power.

His early poems.

Milton was himself a Spenserian; he owned to Dryden in later years that "Spenser was his original," and in some of his earliest lines at Horton he dwells lovingly on "the sage and solemn tones" of the "Faerie Queen," its "forests and enchantments drear, where more is meant than meets the ear." But of the weakness and affectation which characterized Spenser's successors he had not a trace. In the "Allegro" and "Penseroso," the first results of his retirement at Horton, we catch again the fancy and melody of the Elizabethan verse, the wealth of its imagery, its wide sympathy with nature and man. There is a loss perhaps of the older freedom and spontaneity of the Renascence, a rhetorical rather than passionate turn in the young poet, a striking absence of dramatic power, and a want of subtle precision even in his picturesque touches. Milton's imagination is not strong enough to identify him with the world which he imagines; he stands apart from it, and looks at it as from a distance, ordering it and arranging it at his will. But if in this respect he falls both in his earlier and later poems below Shakspere or Spenser, the deficiency is all but compensated by his nobleness of feeling and expression, the severity of his taste, his sustained dignity, and the perfectness and completeness of his work. The moral grandeur of the Puritan breathes, even in these lighter pieces of his youth, through every line. The "Comus," which he planned as a masque for some festivities which the Earl of Bridgewater was

CHAP. VI. holding at Ludlow Castle, rises into an almost impassioned pleading for the love of virtue.

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Puritan fanaticism.

The historic interest of Milton's "Comus," lies in its forming part of a protest made by the more cultured Puritans at this time against the gloomier bigotry which persecution was fostering in the party at large. The patience of Englishmen, in fact, was slowly wearing out. There was a sudden upgrowth of virulent pamphlets of the old Martin Marprelate type. Men, whose names no one asked, hawked libels, whose authorship no one knew, from the door of the tradesman to the door of the squire. As the hopes of a Parliament grew fainter, and men despaired of any legal remedy, violent and weak-headed fanatics came, as at such times they always come, to the front. Leighton, the father of the saintly archbishop of that name, had given a specimen of their tone at the outset of this period by denouncing the prelates as men of blood, Episcopacy as Antichrist, and the Popish queen as a daughter of Heth. The "Histrio-mastix" of Prynne, a lawyer distinguished for his constitutional knowledge, but the most obstinate and narrow-minded of men, marked the deepening of Puritan bigotry under the fostering warmth of Laud's persecution. The book was an attack on players as the ministers of Satan, on theatres as the Devil's chapels, on hunting, maypoles, the decking of houses at Christmas with evergreens, on cards, music, and false hair. The attack on the stage was as offensive to the more cultured minds among the Puritan party as to the Court itself; Selden and Whitelock took a prominent part in preparing a grand masque by which the Inns of Court resolved to answer its challenge, and in the following year Milton wrote his masque of "Comus" for Ludlow Castle. To leave Prynne however simply to the censure of wiser men than himself was too sensible a course for the angry Primate. No man was ever sent to prison before or since for such a sheer mass of nonsense; but a passage in the book was taken as a reflection on the Queen, who had

purposed to take part in a play at the time of its publication; and the sentence showed the hard cruelty of the Primate's temper. In 1634 Prynne was dismissed from the bar, deprived of his university degree, and set in the pillory. His ears were clipped from his head, and the stubborn lawyer was then taken back to prison to be kept there during the King's pleasure.

With such a world around them we can hardly wonder that men of less fanatical turn than Prynne gave way to despair. But it was in this hour of despair that the Puritans won their noblest triumph. They "turned," to use Canning's words in a far truer and grander sense than that which he gave to them, "they turned to the New world to redress the balance of the Old." It was during the years which followed the close of the third Parliament of Charles that a great Puritan migration founded the States of New England.

Virginia.

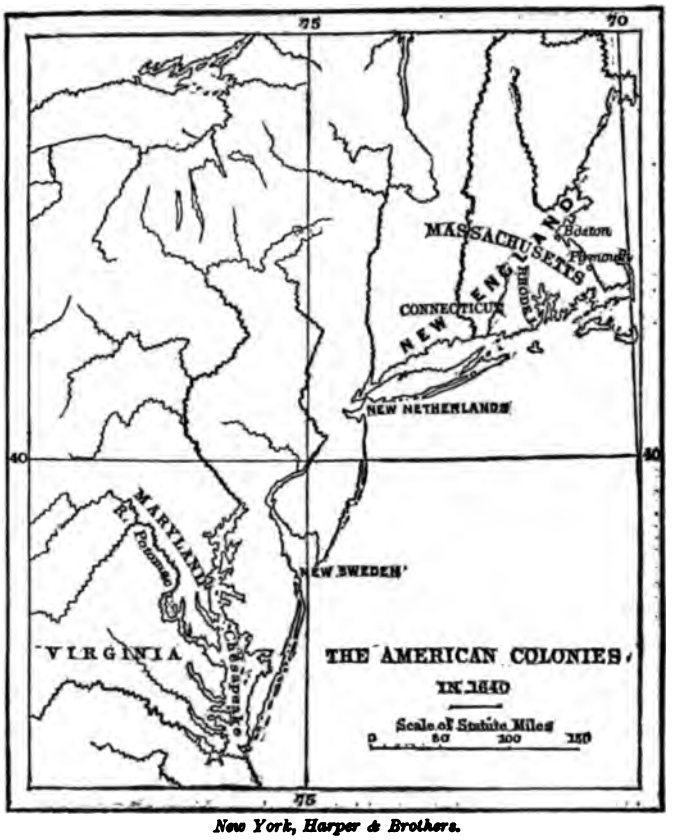
Ralegh's settlement on the Virginian coast, the first attempt which Englishmen had made to claim North America for their own, had soon proved a failure. The introduction of tobacco and the potato into Europe dates from his voyage of discovery, but the energy of his colonists was distracted by the delusive dream of gold, the hostility of the native tribes drove them from the coast, and it is through the gratitude of later times for what he strove to do, rather than for what he did, that Raleigh, the capital of North Carolina, preserves his name. The first permanent settlement on the Chesapeake was effected in the beginning of the reign of James the First, and its success was due to the conviction of the settlers that the secret of the New World's conquest lay simply in labour. Among the hundred and five colonists who originally landed, forty-eight were gentlemen, and only twelve were tillers of the soil. Their leader, John Smith, however not only explored the vast Bay of Chesapeake and discovered the Potomac and the Susquehannah, but held the little company together in the face of famine and

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desertion till the colonists had learned the lesson of toil. In his letters to the colonizers at home he set resolutely aside the dream of gold. "Nothing is to be expected thence," he wrote of the new country, "but by labour"; and supplies of labourers, aided by a wise allotment of land to each colonist, secured after five years of struggle the fortunes of Virginia. "Men fell to building houses and planting corn;" the very streets of Jamestown, as their capital was called from the reigning sovereign, were sown with tobacco; and in fifteen years the colony numbered five thousand souls.

The Pilgrim Fathers.

Only a few years after the settlement of Smith in Virginia, the church of Brownist or Independent refugees, whom we saw driven in Elizabeth's reign to Amsterdam, resolved to quit Holland and find a home in the wilds of the New World. They were little disheartened by the tidings of suffering which came from the Virginian settlement. "We are well weaned," wrote their minister, John Robinson, "from the delicate milk of the mother-country, and inured to the difficulties of a strange land: the people are industrious and frugal. We are knit together as a body in a most sacred covenant of the Lord, of the violation whereof we make great conscience, and by virtue whereof we hold ourselves strictly tied to all care of each other's good and of the whole. It is not with us as with men whom small things can discourage." Returning from Holland to Southampton, they started in two small vessels for the new land: but one of these soon put back, and only its companion, the *Mayflower*, a bark of a hundred and eighty tons, with forty-one emigrants and their families on board, persisted in prosecuting its voyage. In 1620 the little company of the "Pilgrim Fathers," as after-times loved to called them, landed on the barren coast of Massachusetts at a spot to which they gave the name of Plymouth, in memory of the last English port at which they touched. They had soon to face the long hard winter of the north, to bear sickness and famine: even when these



New York, Harper & Brothers.

years of toil and suffering had passed there was a time when "they knew not at night where to have a bit in the morning." Resolute and industrious as they were, their progress was very slow; and at the end of ten years they numbered only three hundred souls. But small as it was, the colony was now firmly established and the struggle for mere existence was over. "Let it not be grievous unto you," some of their brethren had written from England to the poor emigrants in the midst of their sufferings, "that you have been instrumental to break the ice for others. The honour shall be yours to the world's end."

The Puritan migration.

From the moment of their establishment the eyes of the English Puritans were fixed on this little Puritan settlement in North America. Through the early years of Charles projects were being canvassed for the establishment of a new settlement beside the little Plymouth; and the aid which the merchants of Boston in Lincolnshire gave to the realization of this project was acknowledged in the name of its capital. At the moment when he was dissolving his third Parliament Charles granted the charter which established the colony of Massachusetts; and by the Puritans at large the grant was at once regarded as a Providential call. Out of the failure of their great constitutional struggle and the pressing danger to "godliness" in England rose the dream of a land in the West where religion and liberty could find a safe and lasting home. The Parliament was hardly dissolved when "conclusions" for the establishment of a great colony on the other side of the Atlantic were circulating among gentry and traders, and descriptions of the new country of Massachusetts were talked over in every Puritan household. The proposal was welcomed with the quiet, stern enthusiasm which marked the temper of the time; but the words of a well-known emigrant show how hard it was even for the sternest enthusiasts to tear themselves from their native land. "I shall call that my country," wrote the younger Winthrop in answer to feelings of this sort, "where

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I may most glorify God and enjoy the presence of my dearest friends." The answer was accepted, and the Puritan emigration began on a scale such as England had never before seen. The two hundred who first sailed for Salem were soon followed by John Winthrop with eight hundred men; and seven hundred more followed ere the first year of personal government had run its course. Nor were the emigrants, like the earlier colonists of the South, "broken men," adventurers, bankrupts, criminals; or simply poor men and artisans, like the Pilgrim Fathers of the *Mayflower*. They were in great part men of the professional and middle classes; some of them men of large landed estate, some zealous clergymen like Cotton, Hooker, and Roger Williams, some shrewd London lawyers, or young scholars from Oxford. The bulk were God-fearing farmers from Lincolnshire and the Eastern counties. They desired in fact "only the best" as sharers in their enterprize; men driven forth from their fatherland not by earthly want, or by the greed of gold, or by the lust of adventure, but by the fear of God, and the zeal for a godly worship. But strong as was their zeal, it was not without a wrench that they tore themselves from their English homes. "Farewell, dear England!" was the cry which burst from the first little company of emigrants as its shores faded from their sight. "Our hearts," wrote Winthrop's followers to the brethren whom they had left behind, "shall be fountains of tears for your everlasting welfare, when we shall be in our poor cottages in the wilderness."

New England.

For a while, as the first terrors of persecution died down, there was a lull in the emigration. But no sooner had Laud's system made its pressure felt than again "godly people in England began to apprehend a special hand of Providence in raising this plantation" in Massachusetts; "and their hearts were generally stirred to come over." It was in vain that weaker men returned to bring news of hardships and dangers, and told how two hundred of the new comers had perished with their first winter. A letter

from Winthrop told how the rest toiled manfully on. "We now enjoy God and Jesus Christ," he wrote to those at home, "and is not that enough? I thank God I like so well to be here as I do not repent my coming. I would not have altered my course though I had foreseen all these afflictions. I never had more content of mind." With the strength and manliness of Puritanism, its bigotry and narrowness crossed the Atlantic too. Roger Williams, a young minister who held the doctrine of freedom of conscience, was driven from the new settlement to become a preacher among the settlers of Rhode Island. The bitter resentment stirred in the emigrants by persecution at home was seen in their abolition of Episcopacy and their prohibition of the use of the Book of Common Prayer. The intensity of its religious sentiments turned the colony into a theocracy. "To the end that the body of the Commons may be preserved of honest and good men, it was ordered and agreed that for the time to come no man shall be admitted to the freedom of the body politic but such as are members of some of the churches within the bounds of the same." But the fiercer mood which persecution was begetting in the Puritans only welcomed this bigotry. As years went by and the contest grew hotter at home, the number of emigrants rose fast. Three thousand new colonists arrived from England in a single year. Between the sailing of Winthrop's expedition and the assembling of the Long Parliament, in the space, that is, of ten or eleven years, two hundred emigrant ships had crossed the Atlantic, and twenty thousand Englishmen had found a refuge in the West.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RISING OF THE SCOTS.

1635—1640.

England in 1635.

WHEN Weston died in 1635 six years had passed without a Parliament, and the Crown was at the height of its power. Its financial difficulties seemed coming to an end. The long peace, the rigid economy of administration, the use of forgotten rights and vexatious monopolies, had now halved the amount of debt, while they had raised the revenue to a level with the royal expenditure. Charles had no need of subsidies; and without the need of subsidies he saw no ground for again encountering the opposition of Parliament. The religious difficulty gave him as little anxiety. If Laud was taking harsh courses with the Puritans, he seemed to be successful in his struggle with Puritanism. The most able among its ministers were silenced or deprived. The most earnest of its laymen were flying over seas. But there was no show of opposition to the reforms of the Primate or the High Commission. In the two dependent kingdoms all appeared to be going well. In Scotland Charles had begun quietly to carry further his father's schemes for religious uniformity; but there was no voice of protest. In Ireland Wentworth could point to a submissive Parliament and a well-equipped army, ready to serve the King on either side St. George's Channel. The one solitary anxiety of Charles, in fact, lay in the aspect of foreign affairs. The union of Holland and of France had done

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the work that England had failed to do in saving German Protestantism from the grasp of the House of Austria. But if their union was of service to Germany, it brought danger to England. France was its ancient foe. The commercial supremacy of the Dutch was threatening English trade. The junction of their fleets would at once enable them to challenge the right of dominion which England claimed over the Channel. And at this moment rumours came of a scheme of partition by which the Spanish Netherlands were to be shared between the French and the Dutch, and by which Dunkirk was at once to be attacked and given into the hands of France.

Ship-money.

To suffer the extension of France along the shores of the Netherlands had seemed impossible to English statesmen from the days of Elizabeth. To surrender the command of the Channel was equally galling to the national pride. Even Weston, fond as he was of peace, had seen the need of putting a strong fleet upon the seas; and in 1634 Spain engaged to defray part of the expense of equipping such a fleet in the hope that the King's demand would bring on war with Holland and with France. But money had to be found at home, and as Charles would not hear of the gathering of a Parliament means had to be got by a new stretch of prerogative. The legal research of Noy, one of the law-officers of the Crown, found precedents among the records in the Tower for the provision of ships for the King's use by the port-towns of the kingdom, and for the furnishing of their equipment by the maritime counties. The precedents dated from times when no permanent fleet existed, and when sea warfare could only be waged by vessels lent for the moment by the various ports. But they were seized as a means of equipping a permanent navy without cost to the exchequer; the first demand of ships was soon commuted into a demand of money for the provision of ships; and the writs for the payment of ship-money which were issued to London and other coast-towns were enforced by fine and imprisonment. The money

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was paid, and in 1635 a fleet put to sea. The Spaniards however were too poor to fulfil their share of the bargain; they sent neither money nor vessels; and Charles shrank from a contest single-handed with France and the Dutch. But with the death of the Earl of Portland a bolder hand seized the reins of power. To Laud as to Wentworth the system of Weston had hardly seemed government at all. In the correspondence which passed between the two ministers the King was censured as over-cautious, the Star Chamber as feeble, the judges as over-scrupulous. "I am for Thorough," the one writes to the other in alternate fits of impatience at the slow progress they are making. Wentworth was anxious that his good work might not "be spoiled on that side." Laud echoed the wish, while he envied the free course of the Lord Lieutenant. "You have a good deal of humour here," he writes, "for your proceeding. Go on a' God's name. I have done with expecting of Thorough on this side."

The new Ship-money.

With feelings such as these Laud no sooner took the direction of affairs than a more vigorous and unscrupulous impulse made itself felt. Far from being drawn from his projects by the desertion of Spain, Charles was encouraged to carry them out by his own efforts. It was determined to strengthen the fleet; and funds for this purpose were raised by an extension of the levy of ship-money. The pretence of precedents was thrown aside, and Laud resolved to find a permanent revenue in the conversion of the "ship-money," till now levied on ports and the maritime counties, into a general tax imposed by the royal will upon the whole country. The sum expected from the tax was no less than a quarter of a million a year. "I know no reason," Wentworth had written significantly, "but you may as well rule the common lawyers in England as I, poor beagle, do here;" and the judges no sooner declared the new impost to be legal than he drew the logical deduction from their decision. "Since it is lawful for the King to impose a tax for the equipment of the navy, it must be

equally so for the levy of an army: and the same reason which authorizes him to levy an army to resist, will authorize him to carry that army abroad that he may prevent invasion. Moreover what is law in England is law also in Scotland and Ireland. The decision of the judges will therefore make the King absolute at home and formidable abroad. Let him only abstain from war for a few years that he may habituate his subjects to the payment of that tax, and in the end he will find himself more powerful and respected than any of his predecessors." "The debt of the Crown being taken off," he wrote to Charles, "you may govern at your will."

John Hampden.

But there were men who saw the danger to freedom in this levy of ship-money as clearly as Wentworth himself. The bulk of the country party abandoned all hope of English freedom. There was a sudden revival of the emigration to New England; and men of blood and fortune now prepared to seek a new home in the West. Lord Warwick secured the proprietorship of the Connecticut valley. Lord Saye and Sele and Lord Brooke began negotiations for transporting themselves to the New World. Oliver Cromwell is said, by a doubtful tradition, to have only been prevented from crossing the seas by a royal embargo. It is more certain that John Hampden purchased a tract of land on the Narragansett. No visionary danger would have brought the soul of Hampden to the thought of flight. He was sprung of an ancient line, which had been true to the House of Lancaster in the Wars of the Roses, and whose fidelity had been rewarded by the favour of the Tudors. On the brow of the Chilterns an opening in the woods has borne the name of "the Queen's Gap" ever since Griffith Hampden cleared an avenue for one of Elizabeth's visits to his stately home. His grandson, John, was born at the close of the Queen's reign; the dissipations of youth were cut short by an early marriage at twenty-five to a wife he loved; and the young squire settled down to a life of study and religion. His

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wealth and lineage opened to him a career such as other men were choosing at the Stuart court. Few English commoners had wider possessions; and under James it was easy to purchase a peerage by servility and hard cash. "If my son will seek for his honour," wrote his mother from the court, "tell him now to come, for here are multitudes of lords-a-making!" But Hampden had nobler aims than a peerage. From the first his choice was made to stand by the side of those who were struggling for English freedom; and at the age of twenty-six he took his seat in the memorable Parliament of 1620. Young as he was, his ability at once carried him to the front; he was employed in "managing conferences with the Lords" and other weighty business, and became the friend of Eliot and of Pym. He was again returned to the two first Parliaments of Charles; and his firm refusal to contribute to forced loans at the close of the second marked the quiet firmness of his temper. "I could be content to lead," he replied to the demand of the Council, "but for fear to draw on myself that curse in Magna Charta which should be read twice a year against those that do infringe it." He was rewarded with so close an imprisonment in the Tower, "that he never afterwards did look the same man he was before." But a prison had no force to bend the steady patriotism of John Hampden, and he again took a prominent part in the Parliament of 1628, especially on the religious questions which came under debate.

Hampden and Ship-money.

With the dissolution of this Parliament Hampden again withdrew to his home, the home that, however disguised by tasteless changes without, still stands unaltered within on a rise of the Chilterns, its Elizabethan hall girt round with galleries and stately staircases winding up beneath shadowy portraits in ruffs and farthingales. Around are the quiet undulations of the chalk-country, billowy heavings and sinkings as of some primæval sea suddenly hushed into motionlessness, soft slopes of grey grass or brown-red corn falling gently to dry bottoms, woodland

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flung here and there in masses over the hills. A country of fine and lucid air, of far shadowy distances, of hollows tenderly veiled by mist, graceful everywhere with a flowing unaccentuated grace, as though Hampden's own temper had grown out of it. As we look on it, we recall the "flowing courtesy to all men," the "seeming humility and submission of judgment," the "rare affability and temper in debate," that woke admiration and regard even in the fiercest of his opponents. But beneath the outer grace of Hampden's demeanour lay a soul of steel. Buried as he seemed in the affections of his home, the great patriot waited patiently for the hour of freedom that he knew must come. Around him gathered the men that were to stand by his side in the future struggle. He had been the bosom friend of Eliot till the victim of the King's resentment lay dead in the Tower. He was now the bosom-friend of Pym. His mother had been a daughter of the great Cromwell house at Hitchinbrooke, and he was thus closely linked by blood to Oliver Cromwell and more distantly to Oliver St. John. The marriages of two daughters united him to the Knightleys and the Lynes. Selden and Whitelock were among his closest counsellors. It was in steady commune with these that the years passed by, while outer eyes saw in him only a Puritan squire of a cultured sort, popular among his tenantry and punctual at Quarter-Sessions, with "an exceeding propenseness to field sports" and "busy in the embellishment of his estate, of which he was very fond."

Hampden and Ship-money

At last the quiet patience was broken by the news of the ship-money, and of a writ addressed to the High Sheriff, Sir Peter Temple of Stave, ordering him to raise £4,500 on the county of Buckingham. Hampden's resolve was soon known. In the January of 1636 a return was made of the payments for ship-money from the village of Great Kimble at the foot of the Chilterns round which his chief property lay, and at the head of those who refused to pay stood the name of John Hampden.

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For a while matters moved slowly; and it was not till the close of June that a Council warrant summoned the High Sheriff to account for arrears. Hampden meanwhile had been taking counsel in the spring with Whitelock and others of his friends concerning the means of bringing the matter to a legal issue. Charles was as eager to appeal to the law as Hampden himself; but he followed his father's usage in privately consulting the judges on the subject of his claim, and it was not till the February of 1637 that their answer asserted its legality. The King at once made their opinion public in the faith that all resistance would cease. But the days were gone by when the voice of the judges was taken submissively for law by Englishmen. They had seen the dismissal of Coke and of Crewe. They knew that in matters of the prerogative the judges admitted a right of interference and of dictation on the part of the Crown. "The judges," Sir Harbottle Grimston could say in the Long Parliament, "the judges have overthrown the law, as the bishops religion!" What Hampden aimed at was not the judgement of such judges, but an open trial where England might hear, in spite of the silence of Parliament, a discussion of this great inroad on its freedom. His wishes were realized at last by the issue in May of a writ from the Exchequer, calling on him to show cause why payment of ship-money for his lands should not be made.

Charles and Scotland.

The news of Hampden's resistance thrilled through the country at a moment when men were roused by news of resistance in the north. Since the accession of James Scotland had bent with a seeming tameness before aggression after aggression. Its pulpits had been bridled. Its boldest ministers had been sent into exile. Its General Assembly had been brought to submission by the Crown. Its Church had been forced to accept bishops, if not with all their old powers, still with authority as permanent superintendents of the diocesan synods. The ministers and elders had been deprived of their right of excommunicating offenders, save with a bishop's sanction. A

Court of High Commission enforced the supremacy of the Crown. But with this enforcement of his royal authority James was content. He had no wish for a doctrinal change, or for the bringing about of a strict uniformity with the Church of England. It was in vain that Laud in his earlier days invited James to draw his Scotch subjects "to a nearer conjunction with the liturgy and canons of this nation." "I sent him back again," said the shrewd old King, "with the frivolous draft he had drawn. For all that, he feared not my anger, but assaulted me again with another ill-fangled platform to make that stubborn Kirk stoop more to the English platform; but I durst not play fast and loose with my word. He knows not the stomach of that people." The earlier policy of Charles followed his father's line of action. It effected little save a partial restoration of Church-lands, which the lords were forced to surrender. But Laud's vigorous action made itself felt. His first acts were directed rather to points of outer observance than to any attack on the actual fabric of Presbyterian organization. The estates were induced to withdraw the control of ecclesiastical apparel from the Assembly, and to commit it to the Crown; and this step was soon followed by a resumption of their episcopal costume on the part of the Scotch bishops. When the Bishop of Moray preached before Charles in his rochet, on the King's visit to Edinburgh in 1633, it was the first instance of its use since the Reformation. The innovation was followed by the issue of a Royal warrant which directed all ministers to use the surplice in divine worship.

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The new Liturgy.

The enforcement of the surplice woke Scotland from its torpor, and alarm at once spread through the country. Quarterly meetings were held in parishes with fasting and prayer to consult on the dangers which threatened religion, and ministers who conformed to the new ceremonies were rebuked and deserted by their congregations. The popular discontent soon found leaders in the Scotch nobles. Threatened in power by the attempts of the

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Crown to narrow their legal jurisdiction, in purse by projects for the resumption and restoration to the Church of the bishops' lands, irritated by the restoration of the prelates to their old rank, by their reintroduction to Parliament and the Council, by the nomination of Archbishop Spottiswood to the post of Chancellor, and above all by the setting up again the worrying bishops' courts, the nobles with Lord Lorne at their head stood sullenly aloof from the new system. But Charles was indifferent to the discontent which his measures were rousing. Under Laud's pressure he was resolved to put an end to the Presbyterian character of the Scotch Church altogether, and to bring it to a uniformity with the Church of England in organization and ritual. With this view a book of Canons was issued in 1636 on the sole authority of the King. These Canons placed the government of the Church absolutely in the hands of its bishops; and made a bishop's licence necessary for instruction and for the publication of books. The authority of the prelates indeed was jealously subordinated to the supremacy of the Crown. No Church Assembly might be summoned but by the King, no alteration in worship or discipline introduced but by his permission. As daring a stretch of the prerogative superseded what was known as Knox's Liturgy—the book of Common Order drawn up on the Genevan model by that Reformer, and generally used throughout Scotland—by a new Liturgy based on the English Book of Common Prayer

Its rejection.

The Liturgy and Canons had been Laud's own handiwork; in their composition the General Assembly had neither been consulted nor recognized; and taken together they formed the code of a political and ecclesiastical system which aimed at reducing Scotland to an utter subjection to the Crown. To enforce them on the land was to effect a revolution of the most serious kind. The books however were backed by a royal injunction, and Laud flattered himself that the revolution had been wrought. But the patience of Scotland found an end at last. In

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the summer of 1637, while England was waiting for the opening of the great cause of ship-money, peremptory orders from the King forced the clergy of Edinburgh to introduce the new service into their churches. On the 23rd of July the Prayer Book was used at the church of St. Giles. But the book was no sooner opened than a murmur ran through the congregation, and the murmur grew into a formidable riot. The church was cleared, and the service read; but the rising discontent frightened the judges into a decision that the royal writ enjoined the purchase, not the use, of the Prayer Book, and its use was at once discontinued. The angry orders which came from England for its restoration were met by a shower of protests from every part of Scotland. The ministers of Fife pleaded boldly the want of any confirmation of the book by a General Assembly. "This Church," they exclaimed, "is a free and independent Church, just as this kingdom is a free and independent kingdom." The Duke of Lennox alone took sixty-eight petitions with him to the Court; while ministers, nobles, and gentry poured into Edinburgh to organize a national resistance.

The temper of England.

The effect of these events in Scotland was at once seen in the open demonstration of discontent south of the border. The prison with which Laud had rewarded Prynne's enormous folio had tamed his spirit so little that a new tract, written within its walls, denounced the bishops as devouring wolves and lords of Lucifer. A fellow-prisoner, John Bastwick, declared in his "Litany" that "Hell was broke loose, and the devils in surplices, hoods, copes, and rochets were come amongst us." Burton, a London clergyman silenced by the High Commission, called on all Christians to resist the bishops as "robbers of souls, limbs of the beast, and factors of Antichrist." Raving of this sort might well have been passed by, had not the general sympathy with Prynne and his fellow pamphleteers, when Laud dragged them in 1637 before the Star Chamber as "trumpets of sedition," shown how fast the tide of general anger

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against the Government was rising. The four culprits listened with defiance to their sentence of exposure in the pillory and imprisonment for life; and the crowd who filled Palace Yard to witness their punishment groaned at the cutting off of their ears, and "gave a great shout" when Prynne urged that the sentence on him was contrary to law. A hundred thousand Londoners lined the road as they passed on the way to prison; and the journey of these "Martyrs," as the spectators called them, was like a triumphal progress. Startled as he was at the sudden burst of popular feeling, Laud remained dauntless as ever. Prynne's entertainers, as he passed through the country, were summoned before the Star Chamber, while the censorship struck fiercer blows at the Puritan press. But the real danger lay not in the libels of silly zealots, but in the attitude of Scotland, and in the effect which was being produced in England at large by the trial of Hampden. Wentworth was looking on from Ireland with cool insolence at the contest between a subject and the Crown. "Mr. Hampden," he wrote, "is a great brother; and the genius of that faction of people leads them always to oppose, both civilly and ecclesiastically, all that ever authority ordains." But England looked on with other eyes. "The eyes of all men," owns Clarendon, "were fixed upon him as their *Pater Patriæ* and the pilot who must steer the vessel through the tempests and storms that threatened it." In November and December, 1637, the cause of ship-money was solemnly argued for twelve days before the full bench of judges. It was proved that the tax in past times had been levied only in cases of sudden emergency, and confined to the coast and port towns alone, and that even the show of legality had been taken from it by formal statute, and by the Petition of Right.

The Judgement on Ship-money.

The case was adjourned, but its discussion told not merely on England, but on the temper of the Scots. Charles had replied to their petitions by a simple order

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to all strangers to leave the capital. But the Council at Edinburgh was unable to enforce his order; and the nobles and gentry before dispersing to their homes petitioned against the bishops, resolved not to own the jurisdiction of their courts, and named in November, 1637, a body of delegates, under the odd title of "the Tables." These delegates carried on through the winter a series of negotiations with the Crown. The negotiations were interrupted in the spring of 1638 by a renewed order for their dispersion, and for the acceptance of a Prayer Book; while the judges in England delivered in June their long-delayed decision on Hampden's case. Two judges only pronounced in his favour; though three followed them on technical grounds. The majority, seven in number, laid down the broad principle that no statute prohibiting arbitrary taxation could be pleaded against the King's will. "I never read or heard," said Judge Berkley, "that lex was rex, but it is common and most true that rex is lex." Finch, the Chief-Justice, summed up the opinions of his fellow judges. "Acts of Parliament to take away the King's royal power in the defence of his kingdom are void," he said: "they are void Acts of Parliament to bind the King not to command the subjects, their persons, and goods, and I say their money too, for no Acts of Parliament make any difference."

The Covenant.

The case was ended; and Charles looked for the Puritans to give way. But keener eyes discerned that a new spirit of resistance had been stirred by the trial. The insolence of Wentworth was exchanged for a tone of angry terror. "I wish Mr. Hampden and others to his likeness," the Lord Deputy wrote bitterly from Ireland, "were well whipt into their right senses." Amidst the exultation of the Court over the decision of the judges, Wentworth saw clearly that Hampden's work had been done. Legal and temperate as his course had been, he had roused England to a sense of the danger to her freedom, and forced into light the real character of the royal claims.

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The Covenant.

How stern and bitter the temper even of the noblest Puritans had become at last we see in the poem which Milton produced at this time, his elegy of "Lycidas." Its grave and tender lament is broken by a sudden flash of indignation at the dangers around the Church, at the "blind mouths that scarce themselves know how to hold a sheep-hook," and to whom "the hungry sheep look up, and are not fed," while "the grim wolf" of Rome "with privy paw daily devours apace, and nothing said!" The stern resolve of the people to demand justice on their tyrants spoke in his threat of the axe. Strafford and Laud, and Charles himself, had yet to reckon with "that two-handed engine at the door" which stood "ready to smite once, and smite no more." But stern as was the general resolve, there was no need for immediate action, for the difficulties which were gathering in the north were certain to bring a strain on the Government which would force it to seek support from the people. The King's demand for immediate submission, which reached Scotland while England was waiting for the Hampden judgement, in the spring of 1638, gathered the whole body of remonstrants together round "the Tables" at Stirling; and a protestation, read at Edinburgh, was followed, on Johnston of Warriston's suggestion, by a renewal of the Covenant with God which had been drawn up and sworn to in a previous hour of peril, when Mary was still plotting against Protestantism, and Spain was preparing its Armada. "We promise and swear," ran the solemn engagement at its close, "by the great name of the Lord our God, to continue in the profession and obedience of the said religion, and that we shall defend the same, and resist all their contrary errors and corruptions, according to our vocation and the utmost of that power which God has put into our hands all the days of our life."

Charles and Scotland.

The Covenant was signed in the churchyard of the Grey Friars at Edinburgh on the first of March, in a tumult of enthusiasm, "with such content and joy as those who,

having long before been outlaws and rebels, are admitted again into covenant with God." Gentlemen and nobles rode with the documents in their pockets over the country, gathering subscriptions to it, while the ministers pressed for a general consent to it from the pulpit. But pressure was needless. "Such was the zeal of subscribers that for a while many subscribed with tears on their cheeks;" some were indeed reputed to have "drawn their own blood and used it in place of ink to underwrite their names." The force given to Scottish freedom by this revival of religious fervour was seen in the new tone adopted by the Covenanters. The Marquis of Hamilton, who came as Royal Commissioner to put an end to the quarrel, was at once met by demands for an abolition of the Court of High Commission, the withdrawal of the Books of Canons and Common Prayer, a free Parliament, and a free General Assembly. He threatened war; but the threat proved fruitless, and even the Scotch Council pressed Charles to give fuller satisfaction to the people. "I will rather die," the King wrote to Hamilton, "than yield to these impertinent and damnable demands;" but it was needful to gain time. "The discontents at home," wrote Lord Northumberland to Wentworth, "do rather increase than lessen;" and Charles was without money or men. It was in vain that he begged for a loan from Spain on promise of declaring war against Holland, or that he tried to procure two thousand troops from Flanders, with which to occupy Edinburgh. The loan and troops were both refused, and some contributions offered by the English Catholics did little to recruit the Exchequer.

The Scotch Revolution

Charles had directed the Marquis to delay any decisive breach till the royal fleet appeared in the Forth; but it was hard to equip a fleet at all. Scotland in fact was sooner ready for war than the King. The Scotch volunteers who had been serving in the Thirty Years' War streamed home at the call of their brethren; and General Leslie, a veteran trained under Gustavus, came from

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Sweden to take the command of the new forces. A voluntary war tax was levied in every shire. Charles was so utterly taken by surprize that he saw no choice but to yield, if but for the moment, to the Scottish demands. Hamilton announced that the King allowed the Covenant, the service book was revoked; a pledge was given that the power of the bishops should be lessened; a Parliament was promised for the coming year; and a General Assembly summoned at once. The Assembly met at Glasgow in November 1638; it had been chosen according to the old form which James had annulled, and its 144 ministers were backed by 96 lay elders amongst whom all the leading Covenanters found a place. They had hardly met when, at the news of their design to attack the Bishops, Hamilton declared the Assembly dissolved. But the Church claimed its old freedom of meeting apart from any licence from Kings; and by an almost unanimous vote the Assembly resolved to continue its session. Its acts were an undoing of all that the Stuarts had done. The two books of Canons and Common Prayer, the High Commission, the Articles of Perth, were all set aside as invalid. Episcopacy was abjured, the bishops were deposed from their office, and the system of Presbyterianism re-established in its fullest extent.

The Scotch War.

Scotland was fighting England's battle as well as her own. The bold assertion of a people's right to frame its own religion was a practical carrying out of the claim which had been made by the English Parliament of 1629. But Charles was as resolute to resist it now as then. He was firm in his resolve of war, and the strong remonstrances of his Scotch councillors against it were met by a fierce pressure from Wentworth and Laud. Both felt that the question had ceased to be one for Scotland only; they saw that a concession to the Scots must now be fatal to the political and ecclesiastical system they had built up in Ireland and England alike. In both countries those who opposed the Government were looking to the rising in the North. They

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were suspicious of correspondence between the Puritans in England and the Scotch leaders; and whether these suspicions were true or no, of the sympathy with which the proceedings at Edinburgh were watched south of the border there could be little doubt. It was with the conviction that the whole Stuart system was at stake that the two ministers pressed for war. But angered as he was, Charles was a Scotchman, and a Scotch king; and he shrank from a march with English troops into his hereditary kingdom. He counted rather on the sympathy of the northern clans and of Huntly, on the impression produced by the appearance of Hamilton with a fleet in the Forth, and by the suspension of trade with Holland, than on any actual force of arms from the South. The 20,000 men he gathered at York were to serve rather as a demonstration, and to protect the border, than as an invading force. But again his plans broke down before the activity and resolution of the Scots. The news that Charles was gathering an army at York, and reckoning for support on the clans of the north, was answered in the spring of 1639 by the seizure of Edinburgh, Dumbarton, and Stirling; while 10,000 well-equipped troops under Leslie and the Earl of Montrose entered Aberdeen, and brought the Earl of Huntly a prisoner to the south. Instead of overawing the country, the appearance of the royal fleet in the Forth was the signal for Leslie's march with 20,000 men to the Border. Charles had hardly pushed across the Tweed, when the "old little crooked soldier," encamping on the hill of Dunse Law, a few miles from Berwick, fairly offered him battle.

Scotland and France.

The King's threats at once broke down. Charles had a somewhat stronger force than Leslie, but his men had no will to fight; and he was forced to evade a battle by consenting to the gathering of a free Assembly and of a Scotch Parliament. But he had no purpose of being bound by terms which had been wrested from him by rebel subjects. In his eyes the pacification at Berwick was a mere suspension of arms; and the King's summons of Wentworth from

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Ireland was a proof that violent measures were in preparation. The Scotch leaders were far from deceiving themselves as to the King's purpose; and in the struggle which they foresaw they sought aid from a power which Scotch tradition had looked on for centuries as the natural ally of their country. The jealousy between France and England had long been smouldering, and only the weakness of Charles and the caution of Richelieu had prevented its bursting into open flame. In the weary negotiations which the English King still carried on for the restoration of his nephew to the Palatinate, he had till now been counting rather on the friendly mediation of Spain with the Emperor than on any efforts of France or its Protestant allies. At this moment however a strange piece of fortune brought about a sudden change in his policy. A Spanish fleet, which had been attacked by the Dutch in the Channel, took refuge under the guns of Dover; and Spain appealed for its protection to the friendship of the King. But Charles saw in the incident a chance of winning the Palatinate without a blow. He at once opened negotiations with Richelieu. He offered to suffer the Spanish vessels to be destroyed, if France would pledge itself to restore his nephew. Richelieu on the other hand would only consent to his restoration if Charles would take an active part in the war. But the negotiations were suddenly cut short by the daring of the Dutch. In spite of the King's threats they attacked the Spanish fleet as it lay in English waters, and drove it broken to Ostend. Such an act of defiance could only embitter the enmity which Charles already felt towards France and its Dutch allies; and Richelieu grasped gladly at the Scotch revolt as a means of hindering England from joining in the war. His agents opened communications with the Scottish leaders; and applications for its aid was forwarded by the Scots to the French court.

The Short Parliament.

The discovery of this correspondence roused anew the hopes of the King. He was resolved not to yield to

rebels; and the proceedings in Scotland since the pacification of Berwick seemed to him mere rebellion. A fresh General Assembly adopted as valid the acts of its predecessor. The Parliament only met to demand that the council should be responsible to it for its course of government. The King prorogued both that he might use the weapon which fortune had thrown into his hand. He never doubted that if he appealed to the country English loyalty would rise to support him against Scottish treason. He yielded at last to the counsels of Wentworth. Wentworth was still for war. He had never ceased to urge that the Scots should be whipped back to their border; and the King now avowed his concurrence in this policy by raising him to the Earldom of Strafford, and from the post of Lord Deputy to that of Lord Lieutenant. Strafford agreed with Charles that a Parliament should be summoned, the correspondence laid before it, and advantage taken of the burst of indignation on which the King counted to procure a heavy subsidy. But he had foreseen that it might refuse all aid; and in such a case the Earl and the Council held that the King would have a right to fall back on "extraordinary means." Strafford himself hurried to Ireland to read a practical lesson to the English Parliament. In fourteen days he had procured four subsidies from the Irish Commons, and set on foot a force of 8,000 men to take part in the attack on the Scots. He came back, flushed with his success, in time for the meeting of the Houses at Westminster in the middle of April 1640. But the lesson failed in its effect. Statesmen like Hampden and Pym were not fools enough to aid the great enemy of English freedom against men who had risen for freedom across the Tweed Every member of the Commons knew that Scotland was fighting the battle of English liberty. All hope of bringing them to any attack upon the Scots proved fruitless. The intercepted letters were quietly set aside; and the Commons declared as of old that redress of grievances must precede any grant of supplies. No

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subsidy could be granted till security was had for religion, for property, and for the liberties of Parliament. An offer to relinquish ship-money proved fruitless; and after three weeks sitting the "Short Parliament" was dissolved. "Things must go worse before they go better" was the cool comment of St. John. But the country was strangely moved. After eleven years of personal rule, its hopes had risen again with the summons of the Houses to Westminster; and their rough dismissal after a three weeks sitting brought all patience to an end. "So great a defection in the kingdom," wrote Lord Northumberland, "hath not been known in the memory of man."

The Bishops' War.

Strafford alone stood undaunted. He had provided for the resolve of the Parliament by the decision of the Council that in such a case the King might resort to "extraordinary means;" and he now urged that by the act of the Commons Charles was "freed from all rule of government," and entitled to supply himself at his will. The Irish army, he said, was at the King's command, and Scotland could be subdued in a single summer. He was bent, in fact, on war; and he took command of the royal army, which again advanced to the north. But the Scots were as ready for war as Strafford. As early as March they had reassembled their army; and their Parliament commissioned the Committee of Estates, of which Argyle was the most influential member, to carry on the government. Encouraged by the refusal of the English Houses to grant supplies, they now published a new manifesto and resolved to meet the march of Strafford's army by an advance into England. On the twentieth of August the Scotch army crossed the border; Montrose being the first to set foot on English soil. Forcing the passage of the Tyne in the face of an English detachment, they occupied Newcastle, and despatched from that town their proposals of peace. They prayed the King to consider their grievances, and "with the advice and consent of the Estates of England convened in Parliament, to settle a firm and desirable peace." The

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prayer was backed by preparations for a march upon York, where Charles had abandoned himself to despair. The warlike bluster of Strafford had broken utterly down the moment he attempted to take the field. His troops were a mere mob; and neither by threats nor prayers could the Earl recall them to their duty. He was forced to own that two months were needed before they could be fit for action. Charles was driven again to open negotiations with the Scots, and to buy a respite in their advance by a promise of pay for their army and by leaving Northumberland and Durham in their hands as pledges for the fulfilment of his engagements. But the truce only met half his difficulties. Behind him England was all but in revolt. The Treasury was empty, and London and the East India merchants alike refused a loan. The London apprentices mobbed Laud at Lambeth, and broke up the sittings of the High Commission at St. Paul's. The war was denounced everywhere as "the Bishops' War," and the new levies murdered officers whom they suspected of Papistry, broke down altar-rails in every church they passed, and deserted to their homes. To all but Strafford it was plain that the system of Charles had broken hopelessly down. Two peers, Lord Wharton and Lord Howard, ventured to lay before the King himself a petition for peace with the Scots; and though Strafford arrested and proposed to shoot them as mutineers, the English Council shrank from desperate courses. But if desperate courses were not taken, there was nothing for it but to give way. Penniless, without an army, with a people all but in revolt, the obstinate temper of the King still strove to escape from the humiliation of calling a Parliament. He summoned a Great Council of the Peers at York. But his project broke down before its general repudiation by the nobles; and with wrath and shame at his heart Charles was driven to summon again the Houses to Westminster.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LONG PARLIAMENT.

1640—1644.

John Pym.

If Strafford embodied the spirit of tyranny, John Pym, the leader of the Commons from the first meeting of the new Houses at Westminster, stands out for all after time as the embodiment of law. A Somersetshire gentleman of good birth and competent fortune, he entered on public life in the Parliament of 1614, and was imprisoned for his patriotism at its close. He had been a leading member in that of 1620, and one of the "twelve ambassadors" for whom James ordered chairs to be set at Whitehall. Of the band of patriots with whom he had stood side by side in the constitutional struggle against the earlier despotism of Charles he was almost the one survivor. Coke had died of old age; Cotton's heart was broken by oppression; Eliot had perished in the Tower; Wentworth had apostatized. But Pym remained, resolute, patient as of old; and as the sense of his greatness grew silently during the eleven years of deepening misrule, the hope and faith of better things clung almost passionately to the man who never doubted of the final triumph of freedom and the law. At their close, Clarendon tells us, in words all the more notable for their bitter tone of hate, "he was the most popular man, and the most able to do hurt, that have lived at any time." He had shown he knew how to wait, and when waiting was over he showed he knew

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how to act. On the eve of the Long Parliament he rode through England to quicken the electors to a sense of the crisis which had come at last; and on the assembling of the Commons he took his place, not merely as member for Tavistock, but as their acknowledged head. Few of the country gentlemen indeed who formed the bulk of the members, had sat in any previous House; and of the few none represented in so eminent a way the Parliamentary tradition on which the coming struggle was to turn. Pym's eloquence, inferior in boldness and originality to that of Eliot or Wentworth, was better suited by its massive and logical force to convince and guide a great party; and it was backed by a calmness of temper, a dexterity and order in the management of public business, and a practical power of shaping the course of debate, which gave a form and method to Parliamentary proceedings such as they had never had before.

His political theory.

Valuable however as these qualities were, it was a yet higher quality which raised Pym into the greatest, as he was the first, of Parliamentary leaders. Of the five hundred members who sate round him at St. Stephen's, he was the one man who had clearly foreseen, and as clearly resolved how to meet, the difficulties which lay before them. It was certain that Parliament would be drawn into a struggle with the Crown. It was probable that in such a struggle the House of Commons would be hampered, as it had been hampered before, by the House of Lords. The legal antiquarians of the older constitutional school stood helpless before such a conflict of co-ordinate powers, a conflict for which no provision had been made by the law, and on which precedents threw only a doubtful and conflicting light. But with a knowledge of precedent as great as their own, Pym rose high above them in his grasp of constitutional principles. He was the first English statesman who discovered, and applied to the political circumstances around him, what may be called the doctrine of constitutional proportion. He saw that as an element of

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constitutional life Parliament was of higher value than the Crown; he saw too that in Parliament itself the one essential part was the House of Commons. On these two facts he based his whole policy in the contest which followed. When Charles refused to act with the Parliament, Pym treated the refusal as a temporary abdication on the part of the sovereign, which vested the executive power in the two Houses until new arrangements were made. When the Lords obstructed public business, he warned them that obstruction would only force the Commons "to save the kingdom alone." Revolutionary as these principles seemed at the time, they have both been recognized as bases of our constitution since the days of Pym. The first principle was established by the Convention and Parliament which followed on the departure of James the Second; the second by the acknowledgement on all sides since the Reform Bill of 1832 that the government of the country is really in the hands of the House of Commons, and can only be carried on by ministers who represent the majority of that House.

His political genius.

It was thus that the work of Pym brought about a political revolution greater than any that England has ever experienced since his day. But the temper of Pym was the very opposite of the temper of a revolutionist. Few natures have ever been wider in their range of sympathy or action. Serious as his purpose was, his manners were genial and even courtly; he turned easily from an invective against Strafford to a chat with Lady Carlisle; and the grace and gaiety of his social tone, even when the care and weight of public affairs were bringing him to his grave, gave rise to a hundred silly scandals among the prurient royalists. It was this striking combination of genial versatility with a massive force in his nature which marked him out from the first moment of power as a born ruler of men. He proved himself at once the subtlest of diplomatists and the grandest of demagogues. He was equally at home in tracking the subtle intricacies of

royalist intrigues, or in kindling popular passion with words of fire. Though past middle life when his work really began, for he was born in 1584, four years before the coming of the Armada, he displayed from the first meeting of the Long Parliament the qualities of a great administrator, an immense faculty for labour, a genius for organization, patience, tact, a power of inspiring confidence in all whom he touched, calmness and moderation under good fortune or ill, an immovable courage, an iron will. No English ruler has ever shown greater nobleness of natural temper or a wider capacity for government than the Somersetshire squire whom his enemies, made clear-sighted by their hate, greeted truly enough as "King Pym."

The meeting of the Parliament.

On the eve of the elections he rode with Hampden through the counties to rouse England to a sense of the crisis which had come. But his ride was hardly needed, for the summons of a Parliament at once woke the kingdom to a fresh life. The Puritan emigration to New England was suddenly and utterly suspended; "the change," said Winthrop, "made all men to stay in England in expectation of a new world." The public discontent spoke from every Puritan pulpit, and expressed itself in a sudden burst of pamphlets, the first-fruits of the thirty thousand which were issued in the twenty years that followed, and which turned England at large into a school of political discussion. The resolute looks of the members as they gathered at Westminster on the third of November, 1640, contrasted with the hesitating words of the King; and each brought from borough or county a petition of grievances. Fresh petitions were brought every day by bands of citizens or farmers. The first week was spent in receiving these petitions, and in appointing forty committees to examine and report on them, whose reports formed the grounds on which the Commons subsequently acted. The next work of the Commons was to deal with the agents of the royal system. It was agreed that the King's

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name should be spared; but in every county a list of officers who had carried out the plans of the Government was ordered to be prepared and laid before the House. But the Commons were far from dealing merely with these meaner "delinquents." They resolved to strike at the men whose counsels had wrought the evil of the past years of tyranny; and their first blow was at the leading ministers of the King.

Impeachment of Strafford.

Even Laud was not the centre of so great and universal a hatred as the Earl of Strafford. Strafford's guilt was more than the guilt of a servile instrument of tyranny, it was the guilt of "that grand apostate to the Commonwealth who," in the terrible words which closed Lord Digby's invective, "must not expect to be pardoned in this world till he be despatched to the other." He was conscious of his danger, but Charles forced him to attend the Court; and with characteristic boldness he resolved to anticipate attack by accusing the Parliamentary leaders of a treasonable correspondence with the Scots. He reached London a week after the opening of the Parliament; and hastened the next morning to an interview with the King. But he had to deal with men as energetic as himself. He was just laying his scheme before Charles when the news reached him that Pym was at the bar of the Lords with his impeachment for high treason. On the morning of the 11th of November the doors of the House of Commons had been locked, Strafford's impeachment voted, and carried by Pym with 300 members at his back to the bar of the Lords. The Earl hurried at once to the Parliament. "With speed," writes an eye-witness, "he comes to the House: he calls rudely at the door," and, "with a proud glooming look, makes towards his place at the board-head. But at once many bid him void the House, so he is forced in confusion to go to the door till he was called." He was only recalled to hear his committal to the Tower. He was still resolute to retort the charge of treason on his foes, and

"offered to speak, but was commanded to be gone without a word." The keeper of the Black Rod demanded his sword as he took him in charge. "This done, he makes through a number of people towards his coach, no man capping to him, before whom that morning the greatest of all England would have stood uncovered."

Fall of the Ministers.

The blow was quickly followed up. Windebank, the Secretary of State, was charged with a corrupt favouring of recusants, and escaped to France; Finch, the Lord Keeper, was impeached, and fled in terror oversea. In December Laud was himself committed to the charge of the Usher. The shadow of what was to come falls across the pages of his diary, and softens the hard temper of the man into a strange tenderness. "I stayed at Lambeth till the evening," writes the Archbishop, "to avoid the gaze of the people. I went to evening prayer in my chapel. The Psalms of the day and chapter fifty of Isaiah gave me great comfort. God make me worthy of it, and fit to receive it. As I went to my barge, hundreds of my poor neighbours stood there and prayed for my safety and return to my house. For which I bless God and them." In February Sir Robert Berkeley, one of the judges who had held that ship-money was legal, was seized while sitting on the Bench and committed to prison. In the very first days of the Parliament a yet more emphatic proof of the downfall of the royal system had been given by the recall of Prynne and his fellow "martyrs" from their prisons, and by their entry in triumph into London, amidst the shouts of a great multitude who strewed laurels in their path.

Work of the Houses.

The effect of these rapid blows was seen in the altered demeanour of the King. Charles at once dropped his old tone of command. He ceased to protest against the will of the Commons, and looked sullenly on while one by one the lawless acts of his Government were undone. Ship-money was declared illegal; and the judgement in Hampden's case was annulled. In February, 1641, a statute declaring "the ancient right

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of the subjects of this kingdom that no subsidy, custom, impost, or any charge whatsoever ought or may be laid or imposed upon any merchandize exported or imported by subjects, denizens, or aliens, without common consent in Parliament," put an end for ever to all pretensions to a right of arbitrary taxation on the part of the Crown. A Triennial Bill enforced the assembly of the Houses every three years, and bound the returning officers to proceed to election if no royal writ were issued to summon them.

Church reform.

The subject of religion was one of greater difficulty. In ecclesiastical as in political matters the aim of the parliamentary leaders was strictly conservative. Their purpose was to restore the Church of England to its state under Elizabeth, and to free it from the "innovations" introduced by Laud and his fellow-prelates. With this view commissioners were sent in January, 1641, into every county "for the defacing, demolishing, and quite taking away of all images, altars, or tables turned altarwise, crucifixes, superstitious pictures, monuments, and reliques of idolatry out of all churches and chapels." But the bulk of the Commons as of the Lords were averse from any radical changes in the constitution or doctrine of the Church. All however were agreed in the necessity of reform; and one of the first acts of the Parliament was to appoint a Committee of Religion to consider the question. Within as without the House the general opinion was in favour of a reduction of the power and wealth of the prelates, as well as of the jurisdiction of the Church courts. Even among the bishops themselves the more prominent saw the need for consenting to an abolition of Chapters and Bishops' Courts, as well as to the election of a council of ministers in each diocese, which had been suggested by Archbishop Usher as a check on episcopal autocracy. A scheme to this effect was drawn up by Bishop Williams of Lincoln; but it was far from meeting the wishes of the general body of the Commons. The part

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which the higher clergy had taken in lending themselves to do political work for the Crown was fresh in the minds of all; and in addition to the changes which Williams proposed, Pym and Lord Falkland demanded a severance of the clergy from all secular or state offices, and an expulsion of the bishops from the House of Lords. Such a measure seemed needful to restore the independent action of the Peers; for the number and servility of the bishops were commonly strong enough to prevent the Upper House from taking any part which was disagreeable to the Crown.

The Bishops and Parliament.

Further the bulk of the Commons had no will to go. There were others indeed who were pressing hard to go further. A growing party demanded the abolition of Episcopacy altogether. The doctrines of Cartwright had risen into popularity under the persecution of Laud, and Presbyterianism was now a formidable force among the middle classes. Its chief strength lay in the eastern counties and in London, where a few clergymen such as Calamy and Marshall formed a committee for its diffusion; while in Parliament it was represented by Lord Brooke, Lord Mandeville, and Lord Saye and Sele. In the Commons Sir Harry Vane represented a more extreme party of reformers, the Independents of the future, whose sentiments were little less hostile to Presbyterianism than to Episcopacy, but who acted with the Presbyterians for the present, and formed a part of what became known as the "root and branch" party, from its demand for the utter extirpation of prelacy. The attitude of Scotland in the struggle against tyranny, and the political advantages of a religious union between the two kingdoms, gave force to the Presbyterian party; and the agitation which it set on foot found a vigorous support in the Scotch Commissioners who had been sent to treat of peace with the Parliament. Thoughtful men, too, were moved by a desire to knit the English Church more closely to the general body of Protestantism. Milton, who after the composition of his "Lycidas" had spent a year in foreign travel, returned to

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throw himself on this ground into the theological strife. He held it "an unjust thing that the English should differ from all churches as many as be reformed." In spite of this pressure however, and of a Presbyterian petition from London with fifteen thousand signatures which had been presented at the very opening of the Houses, the Parliament remained hostile to any change in the constitution of the Church. The Committee of Religion reported in favour of the reforms proposed by Falkland and Pym; and on the tenth of March, 1641, a bill for the removal of bishops from the House of Peers passed the Commons almost unanimously.

Trial of Strafford.

As yet all had gone well. The King made no sign of opposition. He was known to be resolute against the abolition of Episcopacy; but he announced no purpose of resisting the removal of the bishops from the House of Peers. Strafford's life he was determined to save; but he threw no obstacle in the way of his impeachment. The trial of the Earl opened on the twenty-second of March. The whole of th. House of Commons appeared in Westminster Hall to support it, and the passion which the cause excited was seen in the loud cries of sympathy or hatred which burst from the crowded benches on either side as Strafford for fifteen days struggled with a remarkable courage and ingenuity against the list of charges, and melted his audience to tears by the pathos of his defence. But the trial was suddenly interrupted. Though tyranny and misgovernment had been conclusively proved against the Earl, the technical proof of treason was weak. "The law of England," to use Hallam's words, "is silent as to conspiracies against itself," and treason by the Statute of Edward the Third was restricted to a levying of war against the King or a compassing of his death. The Commons endeavoured to strengthen their case by bringing forward the notes of a meeting of the Council in which Strafford had urged the use of his Irish troops "to reduce that kingdom to obedience;" but the Lords would only admit the evidence

on condition of wholly reopening the case. Pym and Hampden remained convinced of the sufficiency of the impeachment; but the House broke loose from their control. Under the guidance of St. John and Lord Falkland the Commons resolved to abandon these judicial proceedings, and fall back on the resource of a Bill of Attainder. The bill passed the Lower House on the 21st of April by a majority of 204 to 59; and on the 29th it received the assent of the Lords. The course which the Parliament took has been bitterly censured by some whose opinion in such a matter is entitled to respect. But the crime of Strafford was none the less a crime that it did not fall within the scope of the Statute of Treasons. It is impossible indeed to provide for some of the greatest dangers which can happen to national freedom by any formal statute. Even now a minister might avail himself of the temper of a Parliament elected in some moment of popular panic, and, though the nation returned to its senses, might simply by refusing to appeal to the country govern in defiance of its will. Such a course would be technically legal, but such a minister would be none the less a criminal. Strafford's course, whether it fell within the Statute of Treasons or no, was from beginning to end an attack on the freedom of the whole nation. In the last resort a nation retains the right of self-defence, and a Bill of Attainder is the assertion of such a right for the punishment of a public enemy who falls within the scope of no written law.

The Army Plot.

The counsel of Pym and of Hampden had been prompted by no doubt of the legality of the attainder. But they looked on the impeachment as still likely to succeed, and they were anxious at this moment to conciliate the King. The real security for the permanence of the changes they had wrought lay in a lasting change in the royal counsels; and such a change it seemed possible to bring about. To save Strafford and Episcopacy Charles listened in the spring of 1641 to a proposal for entrusting the offices of state to the leaders of the

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Parliament. In this scheme the Earl of Bedford was to become Lord Treasurer, Pym Chancellor of the Exchequer, Holles Secretary of State, while Lords Essex, Mandeville, and Saye and Sele occupied various posts in the administration. Foreign affairs would have been entrusted to Lord Holland, whose policy was that of alliance with Richelieu and Holland against Spain, a policy whose adoption would have been sealed by the marriage of a daughter of Charles with the Prince of Orange. With characteristic foresight Hampden sought only the charge of the Prince of Wales. He knew that the best security for freedom in the after-time would be a patriot king. Charles listened to this project with seeming assent; the only conditions he made were that Episcopacy should not be abolished, nor Strafford executed; and though the death of Lord Bedford put an end to it for the moment, the Parliamentary leaders seem still to have had hopes of their entry into the royal Council. But meanwhile Charles was counting the chances of a very different policy. The courtiers about him were rallying from their first panic. His French Queen, furious at what she looked on as insults to royalty, and yet more furious at the persecution of the Catholics, was spurring him to violent courses. And for violence there seemed at the moment an opportunity. In Ireland Strafford's army refused to disband itself. In Scotland the union of the nobles was already broken by the old spirit of faction; and in his jealousy of the power gained by his hereditary enemy, the Earl of Argyle, Lord Montrose had formed a party with other great nobles, and was pressing Charles to come and carry out a counter revolution in the North. Above all the English army, which still lay at York, was discontented by its want of pay and by the favour shown to the Scottish soldiers in its front. The discontent was busily fanned by its officers; and a design was laid before Charles by which advantage might be taken of the humour of the army to march it upon London, to seize the Tower and free Strafford. With the Earl at

their head, the soldiers could then overawe the Houses and free the King from his thraldom. Charles listened to the project; he refused any expression of assent; but he kept the secret, and suffered the plot to go on, while he continued the negotiations with the Parliamentary leaders.

Death of Strafford.

But he was now in the hands of men who were his match in intrigue as they were more than his match in quickness of action. In the beginning of May, it is said through a squabble among the conspirators, the army plot became known to Pym. The moment was a critical one. Much of the energy and union of the Parliament was already spent. The Lords were beginning to fall back into their old position of allies of the Court. They were holding at bay the bill for the expulsion of the bishops from their seats in Parliament which had been sent up by the Lower House, though the measure aimed at freeing the Peers as a legislative body by removing from among them a body of men whose servility made them mere tools of the Crown, while it averted—if but for the moment—the growing pressure for the abolition of episcopacy. Things were fast coming to a stand-still, when the discovery of the army plot changed the whole situation. Waver as the Peers might, they had no mind to be tricked by the King and overawed by his soldiery. The Commons were stirred to their old energy, London itself was driven to panic at the thought of passing into the hands of a mutinous and unpaid army. The general alarm sealed Strafford's doom. In plotting for his release, the plotters had marked him out as a life which was the main danger to the new state of things. Strafford still hoped in his master; he had a pledge from Charles that his life should be saved; and on the first of May the King in a formal message to the Parliament had refused his assent to the Bill of Attainder. But the Queen had no mind that her husband should suffer for a minister whom she hated, and before her pressure the King gave way. On the tenth of May he gave his assent to the bill by commission, and on the twelfth Strafford

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passed to his doom. He died as he had lived. His friends warned him of the vast multitude gathered before the Tower to witness his fall. "I know how to look death in the face, and the people too," he answered proudly. "I thank God I am no more afraid of death, but as cheerfully put off my doublet at this time as ever I did when I went to bed." As the axe fell, the silence of the great multitude was broken by a universal shout of joy. The streets blazed with bonfires. The bells clashed out from every steeple. "Many," says an observer, "that came to town to see the execution rode in triumph back, waving their hats, and with all expressions of joy through every town they went, crying, 'His head is off! His head is off!'"

The Panic.

The failure of the attempt to establish a Parliamentary ministry, the discovery of the army plot, the execution of Strafford. were the turning points in the history of the Long Parliament. Till May, 1641, there was still hope for an accommodation between the Commons and the Crown by which the freedom that had been won might have been taken as the base of a new system of government. But from that hour little hope of such an agreement remained. The Parliament could put no trust in the King. The air at Westminster, since the discovery of the army conspiracy, was full of rumours and panic; the creak of a few boards revived the memory of the Gunpowder Plot, and the members rushed out of the House of Commons in the full belief that it was undermined. On the other hand, Charles put by all thought of reconciliation. If he had given his assent to Strafford's death, he never forgave the men who had wrested his assent from him. From that hour he regarded his consent to the new measures as having been extorted by force, and to be retracted at the first opportunity. His opponents were quick to feel the King's resolve of a counter-revolution; and both Houses, in their terror, swore to defend the Protestant religion and the public liberties, an oath which was subsequently exacted from every one engaged in civil employment, and

voluntarily taken by the great mass of the people. The same terror of a counter-revolution induced even Hyde and the "moderate men" in the Commons to bring in a bill providing that the present Parliament should not be dissolved but by its own consent; and the same commission which gave the King's assent to Strafford's attainder gave his assent to this bill for perpetuating the Parliament.

Charles in Scotland.

Of all the demands of the Parliament this was the first that could be called distinctly revolutionary. To consent to it was to establish a power permanently co-ordinate with the Crown. But Charles signed the bill without protest. He had ceased to look on his acts as those of a free agent; and he was already planning the means of breaking the Parliament. What had hitherto held him down was the revolt of Scotland and the pressure of the Scotch army across the border. But its payment and withdrawal could no longer be delayed. The death of Strafford was immediately followed by the conclusion of a pacification between the two countries; and the sum required for the disbanding of both armies was provided by a poll-tax. Meanwhile the Houses hastened to complete their task of reform. The civil and judicial jurisdiction of the Star Chamber and the Court of High Commission, the irregular jurisdictions of the Council of the North, the Duchy of Lancaster, the County of Chester, were summarily abolished with a crowd of lesser tribunals. The work was pushed hastily on, for haste was needed. On the sixth of August the two armies were alike disbanded; and the Scots were no sooner on their way homeward than the King resolved to prevent their return. In spite of prayers from the Parliament, he left London for Edinburgh, yielded to every demand of the Assembly and the Scotch Estates, attended the Presbyterian worship, lavished titles and favours on the Earl of Argyle and the patriot leaders, and gained for a while a popularity which spread dismay in the English Parliament. Their dread of his designs was increased when he was found to have been intriguing

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all the while with the Earl of Montrose—whose conspiracy had been discovered before the King's coming and rewarded with imprisonment in the castle of Edinburgh—and when Hamilton and Argyle withdrew suddenly from the capital, and charged Charles with a treacherous plot to seize and carry them out of the realm.

The Irish Rising.

The fright was fanned to frenzy by news which came suddenly from Ireland. The quiet of that unhappy country under Strafford's rule had been a mere quiet of terror. The Catholic Englishry were angered by the Deputy's breach of faith. Before his coming Charles had promised for a sum of £120,000 to dispense with the oath of supremacy, to suffer recusants to practice in the courts of law, and to put a stop to the constant extortion of their lands by legal process. The money was paid; but by the management of Wentworth, the "Graces" which it was to bring received no confirmation from the Irish Parliament. The Lord-Deputy's policy aimed at keeping the recusants still at the mercy of the Crown; what it really succeeded in doing was to rob them of any hope of justice or fair dealing from the government. The native Irishry were yet more bitterly outraged by his dealings in Connaught. Under pretext that as inhabitants of a conquered country Irishmen had no rights but by express grant from the Crown, the Deputy had wrested nearly a half of the lands in that province from their native holders with the view of founding a new English plantation. The new settlers were slow in coming, but the evictions and spoliation renewed the bitter wrath which had been stirred by the older plantation in Ulster. All however remained quiet till the fall of Strafford put an end to the semblance of rule. The disbanded soldiers of the army he had raised spread over the country, and stirred the smouldering disaffection into a flame. In October, 1641, a conspiracy, organized with wonderful power and secrecy, by Sir Phelim O'Neal burst forth in Ulster, where the confiscation of the Settlement had never been forgiven, and spread like wildfire

over the centre and west of the island. Dublin was saved by a mere chance; but in the open country the work of murder went on unchecked. Thousands of English people perished in a few days, and rumour doubled and trebled the number. Tales of horror and outrage, such as maddened our own England when they reached us from Cawnpore, came day after day over the Irish Channel. Sworn depositions told how husbands were cut to pieces in presence of their wives, their children's brains dashed out before their faces, their daughters brutally violated and driven out naked to perish frozen in the woods. "Some," says May, "were burned on set purpose, others drowned for sport or pastime, and if they swam kept from landing with poles, or shot, or murdered in the water; many were buried quick, and some set into the earth breast-high and there left to famish."

Its effect on England.

Much of all this was the wild exaggeration of panic, but there was enough in the revolt to carry terror to the hearts of Englishmen. It was unlike any earlier rising in its religious character. It was no longer a struggle, as of old, of Celt against Saxon, but of Catholic against Protestant. The Papists within the Pale joined hands in it with the wild kernes outside the Pale. When the governing body of the rebels met at Kells in the following spring they called themselves "Confederate Catholics," resolved to defend "the public and free exercize of the true and Catholic Roman religion." The panic waxed greater when it was found that they claimed to be acting by the King's commission, and in aid of his authority. They professed to stand by Charles and his heirs against all that should "directly and indirectly endeavour to suppress their royal prerogatives." They showed a Commission, purporting to have been issued by royal command at Edinburgh, and styled themselves "the King's army." The Commission was a forgery, but belief in it was quickened by the want of all sympathy with the national honour which Charles displayed. To him the revolt seemed a useful

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check on his opponents. "I hope," he wrote coolly, when the news reached him, "this ill news of Ireland may hinder some of these follies in England." In any case it would necessitate the raising of an army, and with an army at his command he would again be the master of the Parliament. The Parliament, on the other hand, saw in the Irish revolt, the news of which met them but a few days after their reassembly at the close of October, the disclosure of a vast scheme for a counter-revolution, of which the withdrawal of the Scotch army, the reconciliation of Scotland, the intrigues at Edinburgh were all parts. Its terror was quickened into panic by the exultation of the royalists at the King's return to London at the close of November, and by the appearance of a royalist party in the Parliament itself.

The new Royalists.

The new party had been silently organized by Hyde, the future Lord Clarendon. To Hyde and to the men who gathered round him enough seemed to have been done. They clung to the law, but the law had been vindicated. They bitterly resented the system of Strafford and of Laud; but the system was at an end. They believed that English freedom hung on the assembly of Parliament and on the loyal co-operation of the Crown with this Great Council of the Realm; but the assembly of Parliaments was now secured by the Triennial Bill, and the King professed himself ready to rule according to the counsels of Parliament. On the other hand they desired to preserve to the Crown the right and power it had had under the Tudors. They revolted from any attempt to give the Houses a share in the actual work of administration. On both political and religious grounds they were resolute to suffer no change in the relations of the Church to the State, or to weaken the prerogative of the Crown by the establishment of a Presbyterianism which asserted any sort of spiritual independence. More complex impulses told on the course of Lord Falkland. Falkland was a man learned and accomplished, the centre

of a circle which embraced the most liberal thinkers of his day. He was a keen reasoner and an able speaker. But he was the centre of that Latitudinarian party which was slowly growing up in the reaction from the dogmatism of the time, and his most passionate longing was for liberty of religious thought. Such a liberty the system of the Stuarts had little burdened; what Laud pressed for was uniformity, not of speculation, but of practice and ritual. But the temper of Puritanism was a dogmatic temper, and the tone of the Parliament already threatened a narrowing of the terms of speculative belief for the Church of England. While this fear estranged Falkland from the Parliament, his dread of a conflict with the Crown, his passionate longing for peace, his sympathy for the fallen, led him to struggle for a King whom he distrusted, and to die in a cause that was not his own. Behind Falkland and Hyde soon gathered a strong force of supporters; chivalrous soldiers like Sir Edmund Verney ("I have eaten the King's bread and served him now thirty years, and I will not do so base a thing as to distrust him"), as well as men frightened at the rapid march of change, or by the dangers which threatened Episcopacy and the Church. And with these stood the few but ardent partizans of the Court; and the time-servers who had been swept along by the tide of popular passion, but who had believed its force to be spent, and looked forward to a new triumph of the Crown.

The Remonstrance.

With a broken Parliament, and perils gathering without, Pym resolved to appeal for aid to the nation itself. The Solemn Remonstrance which he laid before the House of Commons in November was in effect an appeal to the country at large. It is this purpose that accounts for its unusual form. The Remonstrance was more an elaborate State-Paper than a petition to the King. It told in a detailed narrative the work which the Parliament had done, the difficulties it had surmounted, and the new dangers which lay in its path. The Parliament

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had been charged with a design to abolish Episcopacy, it declared its purpose to be simply that of reducing the power of bishops. Politically it repudiated the taunt of revolutionary aims. It demanded only the observance of the existing laws against recusancy, securities for the due administration of justice, and the employment of ministers who possessed the confidence of Parliament. The new King's party fought fiercely against its adoption; debate followed debate; the sittings were prolonged till lights had to be brought in; and it was only at midnight, and by a majority of eleven, that the Remonstrance was finally adopted. On an attempt of the minority to offer a formal protest against a subsequent vote for its publication the slumbering passion broke out into a flame. "Some waved their hats over their heads, and others took their swords in their scabbards out of their belts, and held them by the pommels in their hands, setting the lower part on the ground." Only Hampden's coolness and tact averted a conflict. The Remonstrance was felt on both sides to be a crisis in the struggle. "Had it been rejected," said Cromwell as he left the House, "I would have sold to-morrow all I possess, and left England for ever!" It was presented to Charles on the first of December, and the King listened to it sullenly; but it kindled afresh the spirit of the country. London swore to live and die with the Parliament; associations were formed in every county for the defence of the Houses; and when the guard which the Commons had asked for in the panic of the army plot was withdrawn by the King, the populace crowded down to Westminster to take its place.

Cavaliers and Roundheads.

The gathering passion soon passed into actual strife. Pym and his colleagues saw that the disunion in their ranks sprang above all from the question of the Church. On the one side were the Presbyterian zealots who were clamouring for the abolition of Episcopacy. On the other were the conservative tempers who in the dread of such demands were beginning to see in the course of the Parlia-

ment a threat against the Church which they loved. To put an end to the pressure of the one party and the dread of the other Pym took his stand on the compromise suggested by the Committee of Religion in the spring. The bill for the removal of bishops from the House of Lords had been rejected by the Lords on the eve of the King's journey to Scotland. It was now again introduced. But, in spite of violent remonstrances from the Commons, the bill still hung fire among the Peers; and the delay roused the excited crowd of Londoners who gathered round Whitehall. The bishops' carriages were stopped, and the prelates themselves rabbled on their way to the House. At the close of December the angry pride of Williams induced ten of his fellow bishops to declare themselves prevented from attendance in Parliament, and to protest against all acts done in their absence as null and void. Such a protest was utterly unconstitutional; and even on the part of the Peers who had been maintaining the bishops' rights it was met by the committal of the prelates who had signed it to the Tower. But the contest gave a powerful aid to the projects of the King. The courtiers declared openly that the rabbling of the bishops proved that there was "no free Parliament," and strove to bring about fresh outrages by gathering troops of officers and soldiers of fortune, who were seeking for employment in the Irish war, and pitting them against the crowds at Whitehall. The combatants pelted one another with nicknames which were soon to pass into history. To wear his hair long and flowing almost to the shoulder was at this time the mark of a gentleman, whether Puritan or anti-Puritan. Servants on the other hand or apprentices wore the hair closely cropped to the head. The crowds who flocked to Westminster were chiefly made up of London apprentices; and their opponents taunted them as "Roundheads." They replied by branding the courtiers about Whitehall as soldiers of fortune or "Cavaliers." The gentlemen who gathered round the King in the coming

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struggle were as far from being military adventurers as the gentlemen who fought for the Parliament were London apprentices; but the words soon passed into nicknames for the whole mass of royalists and patriots.

Seizure of the Five Members.

From nicknames the soldiers and apprentices soon passed to actual brawls; and the strife beneath its walls created fresh alarm in the Parliament. But Charles persisted in refusing it a guard. "On the honour of a King" he engaged to defend them from violence as completely as his own children, but the answer had hardly been given when his Attorney appeared at the bar of the Lords, and accused Hampden, Pym, Hollis, Strode, and Haselrig of high treason in their correspondence with the Scots. A herald-at-arms appeared at the bar of the Commons, and demanded the surrender of the five members. All constitutional law was set aside by a charge which proceeded personally from the King, which deprived the accused of their legal right to a trial by their peers, and summoned them before a tribunal that had no pretence to a jurisdiction over them. The Commons simply promised to take the demand into consideration. They again requested a guard. "I will reply to-morrow," said the King. He had in fact resolved to seize the members in the House itself; and on the morrow, the 4th of January, 1642, he summoned the gentlemen who clustered about Whitehall to follow him, and, embracing the Queen, whose violent temper had urged him to this outrage, promised her that in an hour he would return master of his kingdom. A mob of Cavaliers joined him as he left the palace, and remained in Westminster Hall as Charles, accompanied by his nephew, the Elector-Palatine, entered the House of Commons. "Mr. Speaker," he said, "I must for a time borrow your chair!" He paused with a sudden confusion as his eye fell on the vacant spot where Pym commonly sate: for at the news of his approach the House had ordered the five members to withdraw. "Gentlemen," he began in slow broken sentences, "I am sorry

for this occasion of coming unto you. Yesterday I sent a Sergeant-at-arms upon a very important occasion to apprehend some that by my command were accused of high treason, whereunto I did expect obedience and not a message." Treason, he went on, had no privilege, "and therefore I am come to know if any of these persons that were accused are here." There was a dead silence, only broken by his reiterated "I must have them wheresoever I find them." He again paused, but the stillness was unbroken. Then he called out, "Is Mr. Pym here?" There was no answer; and Charles, turning to the Speaker, asked him whether the five members were there. Lenthall fell on his knees, and replied that he had neither eyes nor tongue to see or say anything save what the House commanded him. "Well, well," Charles angrily retorted, "'tis no matter. I think my eyes are as good as another's!" There was another long pause while he looked carefully over the ranks of members. "I see," he said at last, "my birds are flown, but I do expect you will send them to me." If they did not, he added, he would seek them himself; and with a closing protest that he never intended any force "he went out of the House," says an eye-witness, "in a more discontented and angry passion than he came in."

Charles withdraws from London.

Nothing but the absence of the five members and the calm dignity of the Commons had prevented the King's outrage from ending in bloodshed. "It was believed," says Whitelock, who was present at the scene, "that if the King had found them there, and called in his guards to have seized them, the members of the House would have endeavoured the defence of them, which might have proved a very unhappy and sad business." Five hundred gentlemen of the best blood in England would hardly have stood tamely by while the bravoes of Whitehall laid hands on their leaders in the midst of the Parliament. But Charles was blind to the danger of his course. The five members had taken refuge in the city, and it was

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there that on the next day the King himself demanded their surrender from the aldermen at Guildhall. Cries of "Privilege" rang round him as he returned through the streets: the writs issued for the arrest of the five were disregarded by the Sheriffs; and a proclamation issued four days later, declaring them traitors, passed without notice. Terror drove the Cavaliers from Whitehall, and Charles stood absolutely alone; for the outrage had severed him for the moment from his new friends in the Parliament, and from the ministers, Falkland and Colepepper, whom he had chosen among them. But lonely as he was, Charles had resolved on war. The Earl of Newcastle was despatched to muster a royal force in the north; and on the tenth of January news that the five members were about to return in triumph to Westminster drove Charles from Whitehall. He retired to Hampton Court and to Windsor, while the Trained Bands of London and Southwark on foot, and the London watermen on the river, all sworn "to guard the Parliament, the Kingdom, and the King," escorted Pym and his fellow-members along the Thames to the House of Commons. Both sides prepared for a struggle which was now inevitable. The Queen sailed from Dover with the Crown jewels to buy munitions of war. The Cavaliers again gathered round the King, and the royalist press flooded the country with State papers drawn up by Hyde. On the other hand, the Commons resolved by vote to secure the great arsenals of the kingdom, Hull, Portsmouth and the Tower; while mounted processions of freeholders from Buckinghamshire and Kent traversed London on their way to St. Stephen's, vowing to live and die with the Parliament.

Preparations for war.

The Lords were scared out of their policy of obstruction by Pym's bold announcement of the position taken by the House of Commons. "The Commons," said their leader, "will be glad to have your concurrence and help in saving the kingdom: but if they fail of it, it should not discourage them in doing their duty. And whether the kingdom be lost

or saved, they shall be sorry that the story of this present Parliament should tell posterity that in so great a danger and extremity the House of Commons should be enforced to save the kingdom alone." The effect of these words was seen in the passing of the bill for excluding bishops from the House of Lords, the last act of this Parliament to which Charles gave his assent. The great point however was to secure armed support from the nation at large, and here both sides were in a difficulty. Previous to the innovations introduced by the Tudors, and which had been taken away by the bill against pressing soldiers, the King in himself had no power of calling on his subjects generally to bear arms, save for the purposes of restoring order or meeting foreign invasion. On the other hand no one contended that such a power has ever been exercized by the two Houses without the King; and Charles steadily refused to consent to a Militia bill, in which the command of the national force was given in every county to men devoted to the Parliamentary cause. Both parties therefore broke through constitutional precedent, the Parliament in appointing Lord Lieutenants of the Militia by ordinance of the two Houses, Charles in levying forces by royal commissions of array.

Outbreak of war.

But the King's great difficulty lay in procuring arms, and on the twenty-third of April he suddenly appeared before Hull, the magazine of the north, and demanded admission. The new governor, Sir John Hotham, fell on his knees, but refused to open the gates: and the avowal of his act by the Parliament was followed at the end of May by the withdrawal of the royalist party among its members from their seats at Westminster. Falkland, Colepepper, and Hyde, with thirty-two peers and sixty members of the House of Commons joined Charles at York; and Lyttelton, the Lord Keeper, followed with the Great Seal. But one of their aims in joining the King was to put a check on his projects of war; and their efforts were backed by the general opposition

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of the country. A great meeting of the Yorkshire freeholders which Charles convened on Heyworth Moor ended in a petition praying him to be reconciled to the Parliament; and in spite of gifts of plate from the universities and nobles of his party arms and money were still wanting for his new levies. The two Houses, on the other hand, gained in unity and vigour by the withdrawal of the royalists. The militia was rapidly enrolled, Lord Warwick named to the command of the fleet, and a loan opened in the city to which the women brought even their wedding-rings. The tone of the two Houses rose with the threat of force. It was plain at last that nothing but actual compulsion could bring Charles to rule as a constitutional sovereign; and the last proposals of the Parliament demanded the powers of appointing and dismissing the ministers, of naming guardians for the royal children, and of virtually controlling military, civil, and religious affairs. "If I granted your demands," replied Charles, "I should be no more than the mere phantom of a king."

CHAPTER IX.

THE CIVIL WAR.

1642—1646.

THE breaking off of negotiations was followed on both sides by preparations for immediate war. Hampden, Pym, and Hollis became the guiding spirits of a Committee of Public Safety which was created by Parliament as its administrative organ. On the twelfth of July 1642 the Houses ordered that an army should be raised "for the defence of the King and the Parliament," and appointed the Earl of Essex as its captain-general and the Earl of Bedford as its general of horse. The force soon rose to twenty thousand foot and four thousand horse; and English and Scotch officers were drawn from the Low Countries. The confidence on the Parliamentary side was great. "We all thought one battle would decide," Baxter confessed after the first encounter; for the King was almost destitute of money and arms, and in spite of his strenuous efforts to raise recruits he was embarrassed by the reluctance of his own adherents to begin the struggle. Resolved however to force on a contest, he raised the Royal Standard at Nottingham "on the evening of a very stormy and tempestuous day," the twenty-third of August, but the country made no answer to his appeal. Meanwhile Lord Essex, who had quitted London amidst the shouts of a great multitude with orders from the Parliament to follow the King, "and by battle or other way rescue him from his perfidious councillors and restore him to Parliament," was mustering his army at Northampton. *Edgehill.*

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Charles had but a handful of men, and the dash of a few regiments of horse would have ended the war; but Essex shrank from a decisive stroke, and trusted to reduce the King peacefully to submission by a show of force. But while Essex lingered Charles fell back at the close of September on Shrewsbury, and the whole face of affairs suddenly changed. Catholics and Royalists rallied fast to his standard, and the royal force became strong enough to take the field. With his usual boldness Charles resolved to march at once on the capital and force the Parliament to submit by dint of arms. But the news of his march roused Essex from his inactivity. He had advanced to Worcester to watch the King's proceedings; and he now hastened to protect London. On the twenty-third of October, 1642, the two armies fell in with one another on the field of Edgehill, near Banbury. The encounter was a surprise, and the battle which followed was little more than a confused combat of horse. At its outset the desertion of Sir Faithful Fortescue with a whole regiment threw the Parliamentary forces into disorder, while the Royalist horse on either wing drove their opponents from the field; but the reserve of Lord Essex broke the foot, which formed the centre of the King's line, and though his nephew, Prince Rupert, brought back his squadrons in time to save Charles from capture or flight, the night fell on a drawn battle.

Charles at Oxford.

The moral advantage however rested with the King. Essex had learned that his troopers were no match for the Cavaliers, and his withdrawal to Warwick left open the road to the capital. Rupert pressed for an instant march on London, where the approach of the King's forces had roused utter panic. But the proposal found stubborn opponents among the moderate royalists, who dreaded the complete triumph of Charles as much as his defeat; and their pressure forced the King to pause for a time at Oxford, where he was received with uproarious welcome. When the cowardice of its garrison delivered Reading to

Rupert's horse, and his daring capture of Brentford in November drew the royal army in his support almost to the walls of the capital, the panic of the Londoners was already over, and the junction of their trainbands with the army of Essex forced Charles to fall back again on his old quarters. But though the Parliament rallied quickly from the blow of Edgehill, the war, as its area widened through the winter, went steadily for the King. The fortification of Oxford gave him a firm hold on the midland counties; while the balance of the two parties in the north was overthrown by the march of the Earl of Newcastle, with a force he had raised in Northumberland, upon York. Lord Fairfax, the Parliamentary leader in that county, was thrown back by Newcastle's attack on the manufacturing towns of the West Riding, where Puritanism found its stronghold; and the arrival of the Queen in February, 1643, with arms from Holland encouraged the royal army to push its scouts across the Trent, and threaten the eastern counties, which held firmly for the Parliament. The stress of the war was shown by the vigorous efforts of the Houses. Some negotiations which had gone on into the spring were broken off by the old demand that the King should return to his Parliament; London was fortified; and a tax of too millions a year was laid on the districts which adhered to the Parliamentary cause.

The Cornish rising.

In the spring of 1643 Lord Essex, whose army had been freshly equipped, was ordered to advance upon Oxford. But though the King held himself ready to fall back on the West, the Earl shrank from again risking his raw army in an encounter. He confined himself to the recapture of Reading, and to a month of idle encampment round Brill. But while disease thinned his ranks and the royalists beat up his quarters the war went more and more for the King. The inaction of Essex enabled Charles to send a part of his small force at Oxford to strengthen a royalist rising in the west. Nowhere was the royal cause to take so brave or noble a form

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as among the Cornishmen. Cornwall stood apart from the general life of England: cut off from it not only by differences of blood and speech, but by the feudal tendencies of its people, who clung with a Celtic loyalty to their local chieftains, and suffered their fidelity to the Crown to determine their own. They had as yet done little more than keep the war out of their own county; but the march of a small Parliamentary force under Lord Stamford upon Launceston forced them into action. In May, 1643, a little band of Cornishmen gathered round the chivalrous Sir Bevil Greenvil, "so destitute of provisions that the best officers had but a biscuit a day," and with only a handful of powder for the whole force; but, starving and outnumbered as they were, they scaled the steep rise of Stratton Hill, sword in hand, and drove Stamford back on Exeter with a loss of two thousand men, his ordnance and baggage-train. Sir Ralph Hopton, the best of the royalist generals, took the command of their army as it advanced into Somerset, and drew the stress of the war into the West. Essex despatched a picked force under Sir William Waller to check their advance; but Somerset was already lost ere he reached Bath, and the Cornishmen stormed his strong position on Lansdowne Hill in the teeth of his guns. The stubborn fight robbed the victors of their leaders; Hopton was wounded, Greenvil slain, and with them fell the two heroes of the little army, Sir Nicholas Slanning and Sir John Trevanion, "both young, neither of them above eight and twenty, of entire friendship to one another, and to Sir Bevil Greenvil." Waller too, beaten as he was, hung on their weakened force as it moved for aid upon Oxford, and succeeded in cooping up the foot in Devizes. But in July the horse broke through his lines; and joining a force which Charles had sent to their relief, turned back, and dashed Waller's army to pieces in a fresh victory on Roundway Down.

Hampden and the War.

The Cornish rising seemed to decide the fortune of the war; and the succours which his Queen was bringing him

from the army of the North determined Charles to make a fresh advance upon London. He was preparing for this advance, when Rupert sallied from Oxford to beat up the quarters of the army under Essex, which still remained encamped about Thame. Foremost among this Parliamentary force were the "Greencoats" of John Hampden. From the first outbreak of warfare Hampden had shown the same energy in the field that he had shown in the Parliament. He had contributed two thousand pounds to the loan raised by the Houses for the equipment of an army. He had raised a regiment from among his own tenantry, with the parson of Great Hampden for their chaplain. The men wore his livery of green, as those of Hollis or Brooke or Mandeville wore their leaders' liveries of red, and purple, and blue; the only sign of their common soldiership being the orange scarf, the colour of Lord Essex, which all wore over their uniform. From the first the "Greencoats" had been foremost in the fray. While Essex lay idly watching the gathering of an army round the King, Hampden was already engaged with the royal outposts. It was the coming up of his men that turned the day at Edgehill; and that again saved Lord Brooke from destruction in the repulse of the royal forces at Brentford. It was Hampden's activity that saved Reading from a second capture. During the gloomy winter, when the fortunes of the Houses seemed at their worst, his energy redoubled. His presence was as necessary in the Parliament as in the field; and he was continually on the road between London and Westminster. It was during these busy months that he brought into practical shape a league which was destined to be the mainstay of the Parliamentary force. Nowhere was the Puritan feeling so strong as in the counties about London, in his own Buckinghamshire, in Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, and the more easterly counties of Huntingdon, Cambridge, and Northampton. Hampden's influence as well as that of his cousin, Oliver Cromwell, who was already active in the war,

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was bent to bind these shires together in an association for the aid of the Parliament, with a common force, a common fund for its support, and Lord Manchester for its head. The association was at last brought about; and Hampden turned his energies to reinforcing the army of Essex.

Rupert's raid.

The army was strengthened; but no efforts could spur its leader into activity. Essex had learned his trade in the Thirty Years War; and like most professional soldiers he undervalued the worth of untrained levies. As a great noble, too, he shrank from active hostilities against the King. He believed that in the long run the want of money and of men would force Charles to lay down his arms, and to come to a peaceful understanding with the Parliament. To such a fair adjustment of the claims of both a victory of the Parliament would, he thought, be as fatal as a victory of the King. Against this policy of inaction Hampden struggled in vain. It was to no purpose that he urged Essex to follow Charles after Edgehill, or to attack him after his repulse before Brentford. It was equally to no purpose that he urged at the opening of 1643 an attack upon Oxford. Essex drew nearer to the town indeed; but at the news of the Queen's junction with her husband, and of the successes of the Cornishmen, he fell back to his old cantonment about Thame. Hampden's knowledge of the country warned him of danger from the loose disposition of the army, and he urged Essex to call in the distant outposts and strengthen his line; but his warnings were unheeded. So carelessly were the troops scattered about that Rupert resolved to beat up their quarters; and leaving Oxford in the afternoon of Saturday, the 17th of June, he seized the bridge over the Thame at Chiselhampton, and leaving a force of foot to secure his retreat, threw himself boldly with his horsemen into the midst of the Parliamentary army. Essex with the bulk of his men lay quietly sleeping a few miles to the northward at Thame as Rupert struck in the darkness through the leafy lanes that led to the Chilterns, and

swooped on the villages that lay beneath their slopes. At three in the morning he fell on the troops quartered at Postcombe, then on those at Chinnor. Here some fifty were slain, and more taken prisoners, as they sprang half-naked from their beds. The village was fired, and Rupert again called his men together to pursue their foray. But the early summer sun had now risen; it was too late to attack Wycombe as he had purposed; and the horsemen fell back again through Tetsworth to secure their retreat across the Thames.

Death of Hampden.

It was time to think of retreat, for Hampden was already in pursuit. He had slept at Watlington; but the tidings of the foray in the village hard by roused him from slumber, and he at once despatched a trooper to Essex to bid the Earl send foot and horse and cut off the Prince from Chiselhampton bridge. Essex objected and delayed till Hampden's patience broke down. The thought of his own village blazing in that Sunday dawn, his own friends and tenants stretched dead in the village streets, carried him beyond all thought of prudence. A troop of horse volunteered to follow him; and few as they were, he pushed at once with them for the bridge. The morning was now far gone; and Rupert had reached Chalgrove Field, a broad space without enclosures, where he had left his foot drawn up amidst the standing corn to secure his retreat. To Hampden the spot was a memorable one; it was there, if we trust a royalist legend, that "he first mustered and drew up men in arms to rebel against the King." But he had little time for memories such as these. His resolve was to hold Rupert by charge after charge till Essex could come up; and the arrival of these troops of horse with some dragoons enabled him to attack. The attack was roughly beaten off, and the assailants thrown into confusion, but Hampden rallied the broken troops and again led them on. Again they were routed, and Rupert drew off across the river without further contest. It was indeed only the courage of Hampden that had fired his little

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troop to face the Cavaliers; and he could fire them no more. In the last charge a shot struck him in the shoulder and disabled his swordarm. His head bending down, his hands resting on his horse's neck, he rode off the field before the action was done, "a thing he never used to do." The story of the country side told how the wounded man rode first towards Pyrton. It was the village where he had wedded the wife he loved so well, and beyond it among the beech-trees of the Chilterns lay his own house of Hampden. But it was not there that he was to die. A party of royalists drove him back from Pyrton, and turning northwards he paused for a moment at a little brook that crossed his path, then gathering strength leaped it, and rode almost fainting to Thame. At first the surgeons gave hopes of his recovery, but hope was soon over. For six days he lay in growing agony, sending counsel after counsel to the Parliament, till on the twenty-fourth of June the end drew near. "Oh Lord, save my country," so ended Hampden's prayers; "O Lord, be merciful to——!" here his speech failed him, and he fell back lifeless on his bed. With arms reversed and muffled flags, his own men bore him through the lanes and woods he knew so well to the little church that still stands unchanged beside his home. On the floor of its chancel the brasses of his father and his grandfather mark their graves. A step nearer to the altar, unmarked by brass or epitaph, lies the grave in which, with bitter tears and cries, his greencoats laid the body of the leader whom they loved. "Never were heard such piteous cries at the death of one man as at Master Hampden's." With him indeed all seemed lost. But bitter as were their tears, a noble faith lifted these Puritans out of despair. As they bore him to his grave they sang, in the words of the ninetieth psalm, how fleeting in the sight of the Divine Eternity is the life of man. But as they turned away the yet nobler words of the forty-third psalm broke from their lips, as they prayed that the God

who had smitten them would send out anew His light and His truth, that they might lead them and bring them to His holy hill. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise him, which is the help of my countenance and my God!"

Relief of Gloucester

To royalists as to parliamentarians the death of Hampden seemed an omen of ruin to the cause he loved. Disaster followed disaster: Essex, more and more anxious for a peace, fell back on Uxbridge; while a cowardly surrender of Bristol to Prince Rupert gave Charles the second city of the kingdom, and the mastery of the West. The news of the loss of Bristol fell on the Parliament "like a sentence of death." The Lords debated nothing but proposals of peace. London itself was divided. "A great multitude of the wives of substantial citizens" clamoured at the door of the Commons for peace; and a flight of six of the few peers who remained at Westminster to the camp at Oxford proved the general despair of the Parliament's success. From this moment however the firmness of the Parliamentary leaders began slowly to reverse the fortunes of the war. If Hampden was gone, Pym remained; and while weaker men despaired Pym was toiling night and day to organize a future victory. The spirit of the Commons was worthy of their great leader: and Waller was received on his return from Roundway Hill "as if he had brought the King prisoner with him." The Committee of Public Safety were lavish of men and money. Essex was again reinforced. The new army of the associated counties, which had been placed under the command of Lord Manchester, was ordered to check the progress of Newcastle in the North. But it was in the West that the danger was greatest. Prince Maurice continued his brother Rupert's career of success, and his conquest of Barnstaple and Exeter secured Devon for the King. Gloucester alone interrupted the communications between the royal forces in Bristol and those in the North; and at the opening

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of August Charles moved against the city with hope of a speedy surrender. But the gallant resistance of the town called Essex to its relief. It was reduced to a single barrel of powder when the Earl's approach forced Charles to raise the siege on the sixth of September; and the Puritan army fell steadily back again on London after an indecisive engagement near Newbury, in which Lord Falkland fell, "ingeminating 'Peace, peace!'" and the London train-bands flung Rupert's horsemen roughly off their front of pikes.

League with Scotland.

The relief of Gloucester proved to be the turning point of the war. It was not merely that Charles had met with a repulse; it was that he had missed a victory, and that in the actual posture of affairs nothing but a great victory could have saved the King. For the day which witnessed the triumphant return of Essex witnessed the solemn taking of the Covenant. Pym had resolved at last to fling the Scotch sword into the wavering balance; and in the darkest hour of the Parliament's cause Sir Harry Vane had been despatched to Edinburgh to arrange the terms on which the aid of Scotland would be given. First amongst these terms stood the demand of a "unity in Religion;" an adoption, in other words, of the Presbyterian system by the Church of England. To such a change Pym had been steadily opposed. He had even withstood Hampden when, after the passing of the bill for the expulsion of bishops from the House of Peers, Hampden had pressed for the abolition of episcopacy. But events had moved so rapidly since the earlier debates on Church government that some arrangement of this kind had become a necessity. The bishops to a man, and the bulk of the clergy whose bent was purely episcopal, had joined the royal cause, and were being expelled from their livings as "delinquents." Some new system of Church government was imperatively called for by the religious necessities of the country; and though Pym and the leading statesmen were still in opinion moderate

Episcopalians, the growing force of Presbyterianism, and still more the absolute need of Scottish aid and the needs of the war, forced them to seek such a system in the adoption of the Scotch discipline.

England swears to the Covenant.

Scotland, for its part, saw that the triumph of the Parliament was necessary for its own security. Whatever difficulties stood in the way of Vane's wary and rapid negotiations were removed in fact by the policy of the King. While the Parliament looked for aid to the North, Charles had been seeking assistance from the Irish rebels. Though the massacre had left them the objects of a vengeful hate such as England had hardly known before, with the King they were simply counters in his game of kingcraft. Their rising had now grown into an organized rebellion. In October, 1642, an Assembly of the Confederate Catholics gathered at Kilkenny. Eleven Catholic bishops, fourteen peers, and two hundred and twenty-six commoners, of English and Irish blood alike, formed this body, which assumed every prerogative of sovereignty, communicated with foreign powers, and raised an army to vindicate Irish independence. In spite of this Charles had throughout the year been intriguing with the Confederates through Lord Glamorgan; and though his efforts to secure their direct aid were for some time fruitless he succeeded in September in bringing about an armistice between their forces and the army under the Earl of Ormond which had as yet held them in check. The truce left this army at the King's disposal for service in England; while it secured him as the price of this armistice a pledge from the Catholics that they would support his cause. With their aid Charles thought himself strong enough to strike a blow at the Government in Edinburgh; and the Irish Catholics promised to support by their landing in Argyleshire a rising of the Highlanders under Montrose. None of the King's schemes proved so fatal to his cause as these. On their discovery officer after officer in his own army flung down their commissions, the peers who

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had fled to Oxford fled back again to London, and the royalist reaction in the Parliament itself came utterly to an end. Scotland, anxious for its own safety, hastened to sign the Covenant; and on the twenty-fifth of September, 1643, the Commons, "with uplifted hands," swore in St. Margaret's church to observe it. They pledged themselves to "bring the Churches of God in the three Kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, confession of faith, form of Church government, direction for worship, and catechizing; that we, and our posterity after us, may as brethren live in faith and love, and the Lord may delight to live in the midst of us;" to extirpate Popery, prelacy, superstition, schism, and profaneness; to "preserve the rights and privileges of the Parliament, and the liberties of the Kingdom;" to punish malignants and opponents of reformation in Church and State; to "unite the two Kingdoms in a firm peace and union to all posterity." The Covenant ended with a solemn acknowledgement of national sin, and a vow of reformation. "Our true, unfeigned purpose, desire, and endeavour for ourselves and all others under our power and charge, both in public and private, in all duties we owe to God and man, is to amend our lives, and each to go before another in the example of a real reformation."

Pym's plan for 1644.

The conclusion of the Covenant had been the last work of Pym. He died on December 6, 1643, and a "Committee of the Two Kingdoms" which was entrusted after his death with the conduct of the war and of foreign affairs did their best to carry out the plans he had formed for the coming year. The vast scope of these plans bears witness to his amazing ability. Three strong armies, comprising a force of fifty thousand men, appeared in the field in the spring of 1644, ready to co-operate with the Scots in the coming campaign. The presence of the Scottish army indeed changed the whole face of the war. With Lord Leven at its head, it crossed the border in January "in a great frost and snow;" and Newcastle, who was hoping

to be reinforced by detachments from Ormond's army, was forced to hurry northward single-handed to arrest its march. He succeeded in checking Leven at Sunderland, but his departure freed the hands of Fairfax, who in spite of defeat still clung to the West-Riding. With the activity of a true soldier Fairfax threw himself on the forces from Ormond's army who had landed at Chester, and after cutting them to pieces at Nantwich on the twenty-fifth of January, marched as rapidly back upon York. Here he was joined by the army of the Associated Counties, a force of fourteen thousand men under the command of Lord Manchester, but in which Cromwell's name was becoming famous as a leader. The two armies at once drove the force left behind by Newcastle to take shelter within the walls of York, and formed the siege of that city. The danger of York called Newcastle back to its relief; but he was too weak to effect it, and the only issue of his return was the junction of the Scots with its besiegers. The plans of Pym were now rapidly developed. While Manchester and Fairfax united with Lord Leven under the walls of York, Waller, who with the army of the West had held Prince Maurice in check in Dorsetshire, marched quickly to a junction with Essex, whose army had been watching Charles; and the two forces formed a blockade of Oxford.

Marston Moor.

Charles was thrown suddenly on the defensive. The Irish troops, on which he counted as a balance to the Scots, had been cut to pieces by Fairfax or by Waller, and both in the North and in the South he seemed utterly overmatched. But he was far from despairing. Before the advance of Essex he had answered Newcastle's cry for aid by despatching Prince Rupert from Oxford to gather forces on the Welsh border; and the brilliant partizan, after breaking the sieges of Newark and Latham House, burst over the Lancashire Hills into Yorkshire, slipped by the Parliamentary army, and made his way untouched into York. But the success of this feat of arms

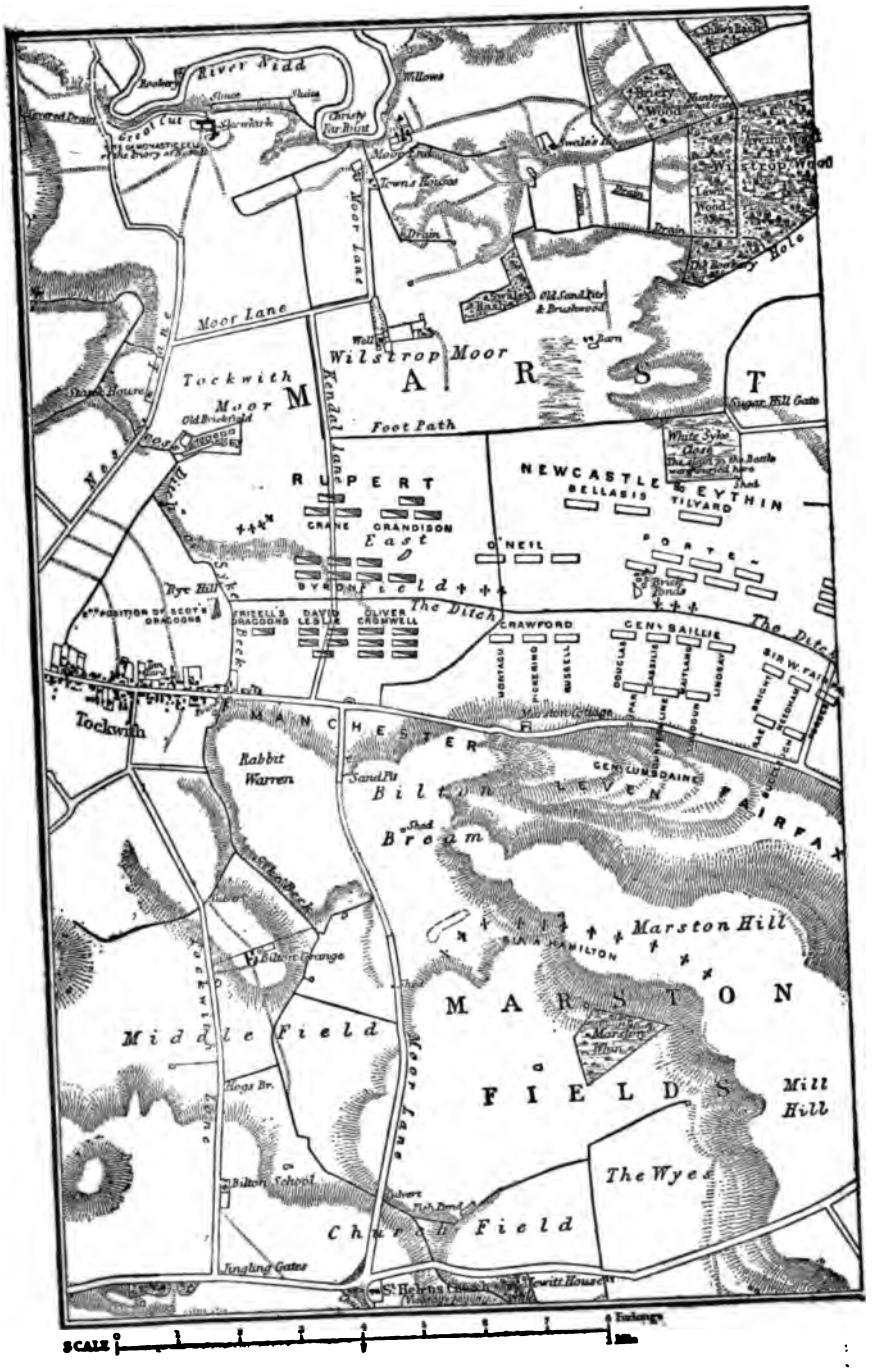
CHAP. IX. The Civil War. 1642-1646.

tempted him to a fresh act of daring. He resolved on a decisive battle; and on the second of July, 1644, a discharge of musketry from the two armies as they faced each other on Marston Moor brought on, as evening gathered, a disorderly engagement. On the one flank a charge of the King's horse broke that of the Scotch; on the other, Cromwell's brigade of "Ironsides" won as complete a success over Rupert's troopers. "God made them as stubble to our swords," wrote the general at the close of the day; but in the heat of victory he called back his men from the chase to back Manchester in his attack on the royalist foot, and to rout their other wing of horse as it returned breathless from pursuing the Scots. Nowhere had the fighting been so fierce. A young Puritan who lay dying on the field told Cromwell as he bent over him that one thing lay on his spirit. "I asked him what it was," Cromwell wrote afterwards. "He told me it was that God had not suffered him to be any more the executioner of His enemies."

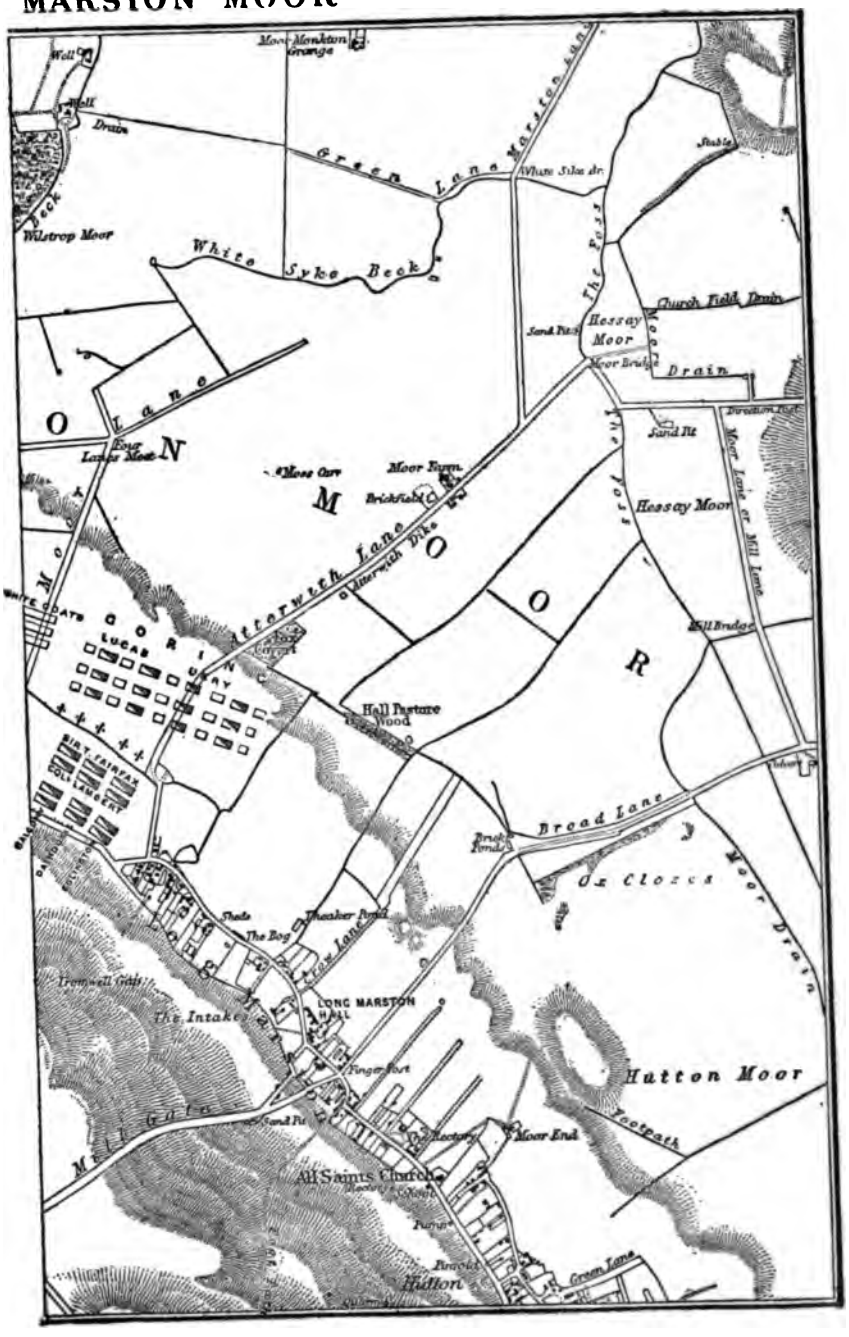
Newbury.

At night-fall all was over; and the royalist cause in the North had perished at a blow. Newcastle fled over sea: York surrendered, and Rupert, with hardly a man at his back, rode southward to Oxford. The blow was the more terrible that it fell on Charles at a moment when his danger in the South was being changed into triumph by a series of brilliant and unexpected successes. After a month's siege the King had escaped from Oxford; had waited till Essex, vexed at having missed his prey, had marched to attack what he looked on as the main royalist force, that under Maurice in the West; and then, turning fiercely on Waller at Cropredy Bridge, had driven him back broken to London, two days before the battle of Marston Moor. Charles followed up his success by hurrying in the track of Essex, whom he hoped to crush between his own force and that under Maurice; and when, by a fatal error, Essex plunged into Cornwall, where the country was hostile, the King hemmed him in among the

BATTLE OF


River Nidd
Moor Lane
Wilstrop Moor
Tockwith Moor
MARST
Foot Path
RUPERT
NEWCASTLE
East
The Ditch
Rye Hill
Tockwith
MANCHESTER
Rabbit Warren
Bilton Grange
Middle Field
Marston Hill
MARSTON
FIELDS
Mill Hill
The Wyes
Church Field
Kingling Gates
SCALE

MARSTON MOOR



hills, and drew his lines tightly round his army. On the second of September the whole body of the foot were forced to surrender at his mercy, while the horse cut their way through the besiegers, and Essex himself fled by sea to London. Nor was this the only reverse of fortune which brought hope to the royal cause. The day on which the army of Essex surrendered to the King was marked by a royalist triumph in Scotland which promised to undo what Marston Moor had done. The Irish Catholics fulfilled their covenant with Charles by the landing of Irish soldiers in Argyle; and as had long since been arranged, Montrose, throwing himself into the Highlands, called the clans to arms. Flinging his new force on that of the Covenanters at Tippermuir, he gained a victory which enabled him to occupy Perth, to sack Aberdeen, and to spread terror to Edinburgh. The news at once told. The Scottish army in England refused to march further from its own country; and used the siege of Newcastle as a pretext to remain near the border. With the army of Essex annihilated and the Scots at a safe distance no obstacle seemed to lie between the King and London; and as he came up from the West Charles again marched on the capital. But if the Scots were detained at Newcastle the rest of the victors at Marston Moor lay in his path at Newbury; and their force was strengthened by the soldiers who had surrendered in Cornwall, but whom the energy of the Parliament had again brought into the field. On the twenty-seventh of October Charles fell on this army under Lord Manchester's command; but the charges of the royalists failed to break the Parliamentary squadrons, and the soldiers of Essex wiped away the shame of their defeat by flinging themselves on the cannon they had lost, and bringing them back in triumph to their lines. Cromwell seized the moment of victory, and begged hard to be suffered to charge with his single brigade. But Manchester shrank like Essex from a crowning victory over the King. Charles was allowed

CHAP. IX. to withdraw his army to Oxford, and even to reappear unchecked in the field of his defeat.

The Civil War. 1642-1646.

The quarrel of Cromwell with Lord Manchester at Newbury was destined to give a new colour to the war. Pym, in fact, had hardly been borne to his grave in Westminster Abbey before England instinctively recognized a successor of yet greater genius in the victor of Marston Moor. Born in the closing years of Elizabeth's reign, the child of a cadet of the great house of the Cromwells of Hinchinbrook, and of kin through their mothers with Hampden and St. John, Oliver had been recalled by his father's death from a short stay at Cambridge to the little family estate at Huntingdon, which he quitted for a farm at St. Ives. We have seen his mood during the years of personal rule, as he dwelt in "prolonging" and "blackness" amidst fancies of coming death, the melancholy which formed the ground of his nature feeding itself on the inaction of the time. But his energy made itself felt the moment the tyranny was over. His father had sat, with three of his uncles, in the later Parliaments of Elizabeth. Oliver had himself been returned to that of 1628, and the town of Cambridge sent him as its representative to the Short Parliament as to the Long. It is in the latter that a courtier, Sir Philip Warwick, gives us our first glimpse of his actual appearance. "I came into the House one morning, well clad, and perceived a gentleman speaking whom I knew not, very ordinarily apparelled, for it was a plain cloth suit, which seemed to have been made by an ill country tailor. His linen was plain, and not very clean; and I remember a speck or two of blood upon his little band, which was not much larger than his collar. His hat was without a hat-band. His stature was of a good size; his sword stuck close to his side; his countenance swoln and reddish; his voice sharp and untuneable, and his eloquence full of fervour."

Cromwell.

The Ironsides.

He was already "much hearkened unto," but his power was to assert itself in deeds rather than in words. He

appeared at the head of a troop of his own raising at Edgehill; but with the eye of a born soldier he at once saw the blot in the army of Essex. "A set of poor tapsters and town apprentices," he warned Hampden, "would never fight against men of honour;" and he pointed to religious enthusiasm as the one weapon which could meet and turn the chivalry of the Cavalier. Even to Hampden the plan seemed impracticable; but the regiment of a thousand men which Cromwell raised for the Association of the Eastern Counties, and which soon became known as his Ironsides, was formed strictly of "men of religion." He spent his fortune freely on the task he set himself. "The business hath had of me in money between eleven and twelve hundred pounds, therefore my private estate can do little to help the public. . . . I have little money of my own (left) to help my soldiers." But they were "a lovely company," he tells his friends with soldierly pride. No blasphemy, drinking, disorder, or impiety were suffered in their ranks. "Not a man swears but he pays his twelve pence." Nor was his choice of "men and religion" the only innovation Cromwell introduced into his new regiment. The social traditions which restricted command to men of birth were disregarded. "It may be," he wrote, in answer to complaints from the committee of the Association, "it provokes your spirit to see such plain men made captains of horse. It had been well that men of honour and birth had entered into their employments; but why do they not appear? But seeing it is necessary the work must go on, better plain men than none: but best to have men patient of wants, faithful and conscientious in their employment, and such, I hope, these will approve themselves." The words paint Cromwell's temper accurately enough; he is far more of the practical soldier than of the reformer; though his genius already breaks in upon his aristocratic and conservative sympathies, and catches glimpses of the social revolution to which the war was drifting. "I had

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rather," he once burst out impatiently, "have a plain russet-coated captain, that knows what he fights for and loves what he knows, than what you call a gentleman, and is nothing else. I honour a gentleman that is so indeed!" he ends, with a return to his more common mood of feeling, but the outburst was none the less a characteristic one.

The Independents.

The same practical temper broke out in a more startling innovation. Against dissidents from the legal worship of the Church the Presbyterians were as bitter as Laud himself. But Nonconformity was rising into proportions which made its claim of toleration, of the freedom of religious worship, one of the problems of the time. Its rise had been a sudden one. The sects who rejected in Elizabeth's day the conception of a National Church, and insisted on the right of each congregation to freedom of worship, had all but disappeared at the close of the Queen's reign. Some of the dissidents, as in the notable instance of the congregation that produced the Pilgrim Fathers, had found a refuge in Holland; but the bulk had been driven by persecution to a fresh conformity with the Established Church. As soon however as Abbott's primacy promised a milder rule, the Separatist refugees began to venture timidly back again to England. During their exile in Holland the main body had contented themselves with the free developement of their system of independent congregations, each forming in itself a complete Church, and to these the name of Independents attached itself at a later time. A small part however had drifted into a more marked severance in doctrine from the Established Church, especially in their belief of the necessity of adult baptism, a belief from which their obscure congregation at Leyden became known as that of the Baptists. Both of these sects gathered a Church in London in the middle of James's reign, but the persecuting zeal of Laud prevented any spread of their opinions under that of his successor; and it was not till their numbers were

suddenly increased by the return of a host of emigrants from New England, with Hugh Peters at their head, on the opening of the Long Parliament, that the Congregational or Independent body began to attract attention.

The Parliament and Uniformity.

Lilburne and Burton declared themselves adherents of what was called "the New England way;" and a year later saw in London alone the rise of "fourscore congregations of several sectaries," as Bishop Hall scornfully tells us, "instructed by guides fit for them, cobblers, tailors, feltmakers, and such-like trash." But little religious weight however could be attributed as yet to the Congregational movement. Baxter at this time had not heard of the existence of any Independents. Milton in his earlier pamphlets shows no sign of their influence. Of the hundred and five ministers present in the Westminster Assembly only five were Congregational in sympathy, and these were all returned refugees from Holland. Among the one hundred and twenty London ministers in 1643, but three were suspected of leaning towards the Sectaries. The struggle with Charles in fact at its outset only threw new difficulties in the way of religious freedom. The great majority of the Parliament were averse from any alterations in the constitution or doctrine of the Church itself; and it was only the refusal of the bishops to accept any diminution of their power and revenues, the growth of a party hostile to Episcopalian government, the necessity for purchasing the aid of the Scots by a union in religion as in politics, and above all the urgent need of constructing some new ecclesiastical organization in the place of the older organization which had become impossible from the political attitude of the bishops, that forced on the two Houses the adoption of the Covenant. But the change to a Presbyterian system of Church government seemed at that time of little import to the bulk of Englishmen. The dogma of the necessity of bishops was held by few; and the change was generally regarded with approval as one which brought the Church of England nearer to that of

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Scotland, and to the reformed Churches of the Continent. But whatever might be the change in its administration, no one imagined that it had ceased to be the Church of England, or that it had parted with its right to exact conformity to its worship from the nation at large. The Tudor theory of its relation to the State, of its right to embrace all Englishmen within its pale, and to dictate what should be their faith and form of worship, remained utterly unquestioned by any man of note. The sentiments on which such a theory rested indeed for its main support, the power of historical tradition, the association of "dissidence" with danger to the State, the strong English instinct of order, the as strong English dislike of "innovations," with the abhorrence of "indifferency" as a sign of lukewarmness in matters of religion, had only been intensified by the earlier incidents of the struggle with the King.

Growth of dissidence.

The Parliament therefore was steadily pressing on the new system of ecclesiastical government in the midst of the troubles of the war. An Assembly of Divines, which was called together in 1643 at Westminster, and which sat in the Jerusalem Chamber during the five years which followed, was directed to revise the Articles, to draw up a Confession of Faith, and a Directory of Public Worship; and these with a scheme of Church government, a scheme only distinguished from that of Scotland by the significant addition of a lay court of superior appeal set by Parliament over the whole system of Church courts and assemblies, were accepted by the Houses and embodied in a series of Ordinances. But while the Divines were drawing up their platform of uniform belief and worship, dissidence was growing fast into a religious power. In the terrible agony of the struggle against Charles individual conviction became a stronger force than religious tradition. Theological speculation took an unprecedented boldness from the temper of the times. The shock of war had broken the bonds of custom, and given a violent impulse to the freest thought. "Behold now this vast city!" cried Milton from

London, "a city of refuge, the mansionhouse of liberty, encompassed with God's protection! The shop of war hath not there more anvils and hammers working to fashion out the plates and instruments of armed justice in defence of beleaguered truth than there be pens and heads there, sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas wherewith to present us, as with their homage and fealty, the approaching reformation; others as fast reading, trying all things, according to the force of reason and convincement." The poet himself had drifted from his Presbyterian standpoint and saw that "new Presbyter is but old Priest writ large." The same change was going on widely about him. Four years after the war had begun a horror-stricken pamphleteer numbered sixteen religious sects as existing in defiance of the law; and, widely as these bodies differed among themselves, all were at one in repudiating any right of control in faith or in worship on the part of the Church or its clergy. Above all, the class which became specially infected with the spirit of religious freedom was the class to whose zeal and vigour the Parliament was forced to look for success in the struggle. Cromwell had wisely sought for good fighting men among the "godly" farmers of the Associated Counties. But where he found such men he found dissidents, men who were resolved to seek God after their own fashion, and who were as hostile to the despotism of the national Church as to the despotism of the King.

Cromwell and the dissidents.

The problem was a new and a difficult one; but Cromwell met it in the same practical temper which showed itself in his dealings with the social difficulties that stood in the way of military organization. The sentiments of these farmers were not his own. Bitter as had been his hatred of the bishops, and strenuously as he had worked to bring about a change in Church government, Cromwell, like most of the Parliamentary leaders, seems to have been content with the new Presbyterianism, and the Presbyterians were more than content with him. Lord Manchester "suffered

him to guide the army at his pleasure." "The man, Cromwell," writes the Scotchman Baillie, "is a very wise and active head, universally well beloved as religious and stout." But they were startled and alarmed by his dealings with these dissident recruits. He met the problem in his unspeculative fashion. He wanted good soldiers and good men; and, if they were these, the Independent, the Baptist, the Leveller found entry among his Ironsides. "You would respect them, did you see them," he answered the panic-stricken Presbyterians who charged them with "Anabaptistry" and revolutionary aims: "they are no Anabaptists: they are honest, sober Christians; they expect to be used as men." But he was busier with his new regiment than with theories of Church and State; and the Ironsides were no sooner in action that they proved themselves such soldiers as the war had never seen yet. "Truly they were never beaten at all," their leader said proudly at its close. At Winceby fight they charged "singing psalms," cleared Lincolnshire of the Cavendishes, and freed the eastern counties from all danger from Newcastle's partizans. At Marston Moor they faced and routed Rupert's chivalry. At Newbury it was only Manchester's reluctance that hindered them from completing the ruin of Charles.

Self-renouncing Ordinance.

Cromwell had shown his capacity for organization in the creation of the Ironsides; his military genius had displayed itself at Marston Moor. Newbury raised him into a political leader. "Without a more speedy, vigorous, and effective prosecution of the war," he said to the Commons after his quarrel with Manchester, "casting off all lingering proceedings, like those of soldiers of fortune beyond sea to spin out a war, we shall make the kingdom weary of us, and hate the name of a Parliament." But under the leaders who at present conducted it a vigorous conduct of the war was hopeless. They were, in Cromwell's plain words, "afraid to conquer." They desired not to crush Charles, but to force him back, with as much of his old

strength remaining as might be, to the position of a constitutional King. The old loyalty, too, clogged their enterprise; they shrank from the taint of treason. "If the King be beaten" Manchester urged at Newbury, "he will still be king; if he beat us he will hang us all for traitors." To a mood like this Cromwell's reply seemed horrible; "If I met the King in battle I would fire my pistol at the King as at another." The army, too, as he long ago urged at Edgehill, was not an army to conquer with. Now, as then, he urged that till the whole force was new modelled, and placed under a stricter discipline, "they must not expect any notable success in anything they went about." But the first step in such a re-organization must be a change of officers. The army was led and officered by members of the two Houses, and the Self-renouncing Ordinance, which was introduced by Cromwell and Vane, declared the tenure of military or civil offices incompatible with a seat in either.

The New Model.

The long and bitter resistance which this measure met in either House was justified at a later time by the political results that followed the rupture of the tie which had hitherto bound the army to the Parliament. But the drift of public opinion was too strong to be withstood. The country was weary of the mismanagement of the war, and demanded that military necessities should be no longer set aside on political grounds. The Ordinance passed the Houses on the third of April, 1645, and its passage brought about the retirement of Essex, Manchester, and Waller. The new organization of the army went rapidly on through the spring under a new commander-in-chief, Sir Thomas Fairfax, the hero of the long contest in Yorkshire, and who had been raised into fame by his victory at Nantwich, and his bravery at Marston Moor. But behind Fairfax stood Cromwell; and the principles on which Cromwell had formed his Ironsides were carried out on a larger scale in the "New Model." The one aim was to get together twenty thousand "honest" men. "Be careful," Cromwell

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wrote, "what captains of horse you choose, what men be mounted. A few honest men are better than numbers. If you choose godly honest men to be captains of horse, honest men will follow them." The result was a curious medley of men of different ranks among the officers of the New Model. The bulk of those in high command remained men of noble or gentle blood, Montagues, Pickerings, Fortescues, Sheffields, Sidneys, and the like. But side by side with these, though in far smaller proportion, were seen officers like Ewer, who had been a serving-man, like Okey, who had been a drayman, or Rainsborough, who had been a "skipper at sea." A result hardly less notable was the youth of the officers. Amongst those in high command there were few who, like Cromwell, had passed middle age. Fairfax was but thirty-three years old, and most of his colonels were even younger.

The Army and the dissidents.

Equally strange was the mixture of religions in its ranks. The remonstrances of the Presbyterians had only forced Cromwell's mind forward on the road of toleration. "The State, in choosing men to serve it," he wrote before Marston Moor, "takes no notice of these opinions. If they be willing faithfully to serve it, that satisfies." Marston Moor spurred him to press on the Parliament the need of at least "tolerating" dissidents; and he succeeded in procuring the appointment of a Committee of the Commons to find some means of effecting this. But the conservative temper of the bulk of the Puritans was at last roused by his efforts. "We detest and abhor," wrote the London clergy in 1645, "the much endeavoured Toleration;" and the Corporation of London petitioned Parliament to suppress all sects "without toleration." The Parliament itself too remained steady on the conservative side. But the fortunes of the war told for religious freedom. Essex and his Presbyterians only marched from defeat to defeat. In remodelling the army it was necessary to insert a clause in the Act which enabled Fairfax to dispense with the signature of the Covenant in the case of "godly

men;" for among the farmers from the eastern counties, who formed the bulk of its privates, dissidence of every type had gained a firm foothold.

Negotiations at Uxbridge.

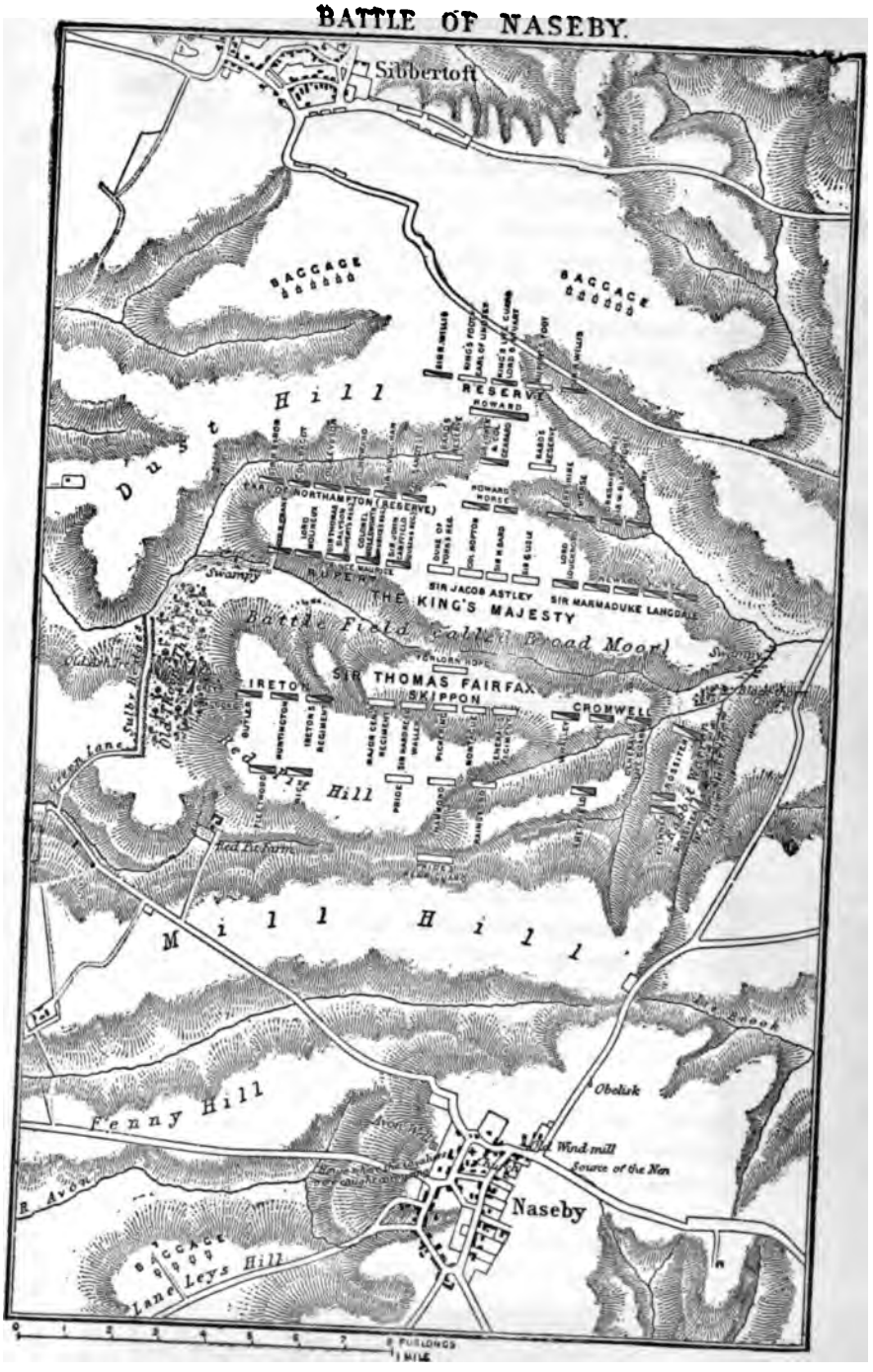
Of the political and religious aspect of the New Model we shall have to speak at a later time; as yet its energy was directed solely to "the speedy and vigorous prosecution of the war." At the very moment when Fairfax was ready for action the policy of Cromwell was aided by the policy of the King. From the hour when Newbury marked the breach between the peace and war parties in the Parliament, and when the last became identified with the partizans of religious liberty, the Scotch Commissioners and the bulk of the Commons had seen that their one chance of hindering what they looked on as revolution in Church and State lay in pressing for fresh negotiations with Charles. These were opened at Uxbridge, and prolonged through the winter; but the hopes of concession which the King held out were suddenly withdrawn in the spring of 1645. He saw, as he thought, the Parliamentary army dissolved and ruined by its new modelling at an instant when news came from Scotland of fresh successes on the part of Montrose, and of his overthrow of the troops under Argyle's command in a victory at Inverlochy. "Before the end of the summer," wrote the conqueror, "I shall be in a position to come to your Majesty's aid with a brave army." He pressed Charles to advance to the Scottish border, where a junction of their armies might still suffice to crush any force the Parliament could bring against them. The party of war at once gained the ascendant in the royal councils. The negotiations at Uxbridge were broken off, and in May Charles opened his campaign by a march to the north.

Naseby.

At first all went well for the King. Leicester was stormed, the blockade of Chester raised, and the eastern counties threatened, until Fairfax, who had hoped to draw Charles back again by a blockade of Oxford, was forced to

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hurry on his track. Cromwell, who had been suffered by the House to retain his command for a few days in spite of the Ordinance, joined Fairfax as he drew near the King, and his arrival was greeted by loud shouts of welcome from the troops. On the fourteenth of June, 1645, the two armies met near Naseby, to the north-west of Northampton. The King was eager to fight; "Never have my affairs been in as good a state," he cried; and Prince Rupert was as impatient as his uncle. On the other side, even Cromwell doubted as a soldier the success of his newly-drilled troops, though his religious enthusiasm swept away doubt in the assurance of victory. "I can say this of Naseby," he wrote soon after, "that when I saw the enemy draw up and march in gallant order towards us, and we a company of poor ignorant men, to seek to order our battle, the general having commanded me to order all the horse, I could not, riding alone about my business, but smile out to God in praises, in assurance of victory, because God would by things that are not bring to nought things that are. Of which I had great assurance, and God did it." The battle began with a furious charge of Rupert uphill, which routed the wing opposed to him under Ireton; while the royalist foot, after a single discharge, clubbed their muskets and fell on the centre under Fairfax so hotly that it slowly and stubbornly gave way. But the Ironsides were conquerors on the left. A single charge broke the northern horse under Langdale, who had already fled before them at Marston Moor; and holding his troops firmly in hand, Cromwell fell with them on the flank of the royalist foot in the very crisis of its success. A panic of the King's reserve, and its flight from the field, aided his efforts. It was in vain that Rupert returned with forces exhausted by pursuit, that Charles in a passion of despair called on his troopers for "one charge more." The battle was over: artillery, baggage, even the royal papers, fell into the conqueror's hands; five thousand men surrendered; and


BATTLE OF NASEBY.
Sibbertoft
BAGGAGE
BAGGAGE
RESERVE
HOWARD
Dust Hill
EARL OF NORTHAMPTON (RESERVE)
HOWARD HORSE
Swampy
RUPERT
SIR JACOB ASTLEY
SIR MARMADUKE LANGDALE
THE KING'S MAJESTY
Battle Field called Broad Moor
SIR THOMAS FAIRFAX
SKIPPON
IRETON
CROMWELL
Red Hill
Mill Hill
Obelisk
Wind mill
Source of the Nen
Fenny Hill
R. Avon
Naseby
Lane
Leys Hill
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 FURLONGS
1 MILE

only two thousand followed the King in his headlong flight from the field.

Close of the War.

The war was ended at a blow. While Charles wandered helplessly along the Welsh border in search of fresh forces, Fairfax marched rapidly on the south-west, where an organized royal force alone existed; routed Goring's force at Langport, in Somersetshire; broke up the royalist army; and in three weeks was master to the Land's End. A victory at Kilsyth, which gave Scotland for the moment to Montrose, threw a transient gleam over the darkening fortunes of his master's cause; but the surrender of Bristol to the Parliamentary army, and the dispersion of the last force Charles could gather from Wales in an attempt to relieve Chester, was followed in September by news of the crushing and irretrievable defeat of the "Great Marquis" at Philiphaugh. In the wreck of the royal cause we may pause for a moment over an incident which brings out in relief the best temper of both sides. Cromwell, who was sweeping over the southern counties to trample out the last trace of resistance, "spent much time with God in prayer before the storm" of Basing House, where the Marquis of Winchester had held stoutly out through the war for the King. The storm ended its resistance, and the brave old Royalist was brought in a prisoner with his house flaming around him. He "broke out," reports a Puritan bystander, "and said, 'that if the King had no more ground in England but Basing House, he would adventure it as he did, and so maintain it to the uttermost,' comforting himself in this matter 'that Basing House was called Loyalty.'" Of loyalty such as this Charles was utterly unworthy. The seizure of his papers at Naseby had hardly disclosed his earlier intrigues with the Irish Catholics when the Parliament was able to reveal to England a fresh treaty with them, which purchased no longer their neutrality, but their aid, by the simple concession of every demand they had made. The shame was without profit,

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for whatever aid Ireland might have given came too late to be of service. The spring of 1646 saw the few troops who still clung to Charles surrounded and routed at Stow. "You have done your work now," their leader, Sir Jacob Astley, said bitterly to his conquerors, "and may go to play, unless you fall out among yourselves."

CHAPTER X.

THE ARMY AND THE PARLIAMENT.

1646—1649.

The new struggle.

WITH the close of the Civil War we enter on a time of confused struggles, a time tedious and uninteresting in its outer details, but of higher interest than even the war itself in its bearing on our after history. Modern England, the England among whose thoughts and sentiments we actually live, began, however dimly and darkly, with the triumph of Naseby. Old things passed silently away. When Astley gave up his sword the "work" of the generations which had struggled for Protestantism against Catholicism, for public liberty against absolute rule, in his own emphatic phrase, was "done." So far as these contests were concerned, however the later Stuarts might strive to revive them, England could safely "go to play." English religion was never to be more in danger. English liberty was never to be really in peril from the efforts of kings after a personal rule. Whatever reaction might come about, it would never bring into question the great constitutional results that the Long Parliament had wrought. But with the end of this older work a new work began. The constitutional and ecclesiastical problems which still in one shape or another beset us started to the front as subjects of national debate in the years between the close of the Civil War and the death of the King. The great parties which have ever since divided the social, the political, and the religious life of England, whether as Independents and Presbyterians, as Whigs and Tories, as Conservatives

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and Liberals, sprang into organized existence in the contest between the Army and the Parliament. Then for the first time began a struggle which is far from having ended yet, the struggle between political tradition and political progress, between the principle of religious conformity and the principle of religious freedom.

Religious liberty.

It was the religious struggle which drew the political in its train. The victory of Naseby raised a wider question than that of mere toleration. "Honest men served you faithfully in this action," Cromwell wrote to the Speaker of the House of Commons from the field. "Sir, they are trusty: I beseech you in the name of God not to discourage them. He that ventures his life for the liberty of his country, I wish he trust God for the liberty of his conscience." The storm of Bristol encouraged him to proclaim the new principle yet more distinctly. "Presbyterians, Independents, all here have the same spirit of faith and prayer, the same presence and answer. They agree here, have no names of difference; pity it is it should be otherwise anywhere. All that believe have the real unity, which is the most glorious, being the inward and spiritual, in the body and in the head. For being united in forms (commonly called uniformity), every Christian will for peace' sake study and do as far as conscience will permit. And from brethren in things of the mind we look for no compulsion but that of light and reason." The increasing firmness of Cromwell's language was due to the growing irritation of his opponents. The two parties became every day more clearly defined. The Presbyterian ministers complained bitterly of the increase of the sectaries, and denounced the toleration which had come into practical existence without sanction from the law. Scotland, whose army was still before Newark, pressed for the execution of the Covenant and the universal enforcement of a religious uniformity. Sir Harry Vane, on the other hand, who now headed the party which advocated religious freedom in the Commons, strove to bring the Parliament

round to less rigid courses by the introduction of two hundred and thirty new members, who filled the seats left vacant by the withdrawal of royalist members, and the more eminent of whom, such as Ireton and Algernon Sidney, were inclined to support the Independents. But the majority in both Houses still clung to the Tudor tradition of religious uniformity; and it was only the pressure of the New Model, and the remonstrances of Cromwell as its mouthpiece, that hindered any effective movement towards persecution.

Charles in the Scotch camp.

Amidst the wreck of his fortunes Charles seized on the growing discord among his opponents as a means of retrieving all. He trusted that the dread of revolution would at last rally the whole body of conservative Englishmen round the royal standard; and it is likely enough that had he frankly flung himself on the side of the Parliament at this juncture he might have regained much of his older power. But, beaten and hunted as he was from place to place, he was determined to regain not much but all. The terms which the Houses offered were still severe; and Charles believed that a little kingcraft would free him from the need of accepting any terms whatever. He intrigued therefore busily with both parties, and promised liberty of worship to Vane and the Independents at the moment when he was negotiating with the Parliament and with the Scots. His negotiations were quickened by the march of Fairfax upon Oxford. Driven from his last refuge at the close of April 1646, the King had to choose between a flight from the realm or a surrender to one of the armies about him. Charles had no mind to forsake England when all seemed working for his success; and after some aimless wanderings he made his appearance in May in the camp of the Scots. The choice was dexterous enough. The Parliament and the army were still left face to face. On the other hand the Scots were indignant at what they regarded as a breach of faith in the toleration which existed in England, and

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Charles believed that his presence would at once rekindle their loyalty to a king of Scottish blood. But the results of his surrender were other than he had hoped. To the world at large his action seemed simply the prelude to an accommodation with his opponents on the ground of religious uniformity. This new aspect of affairs threatened the party of religious freedom with ruin. Hated as they were by the Scots, by the Lords, by the city of London, the apparent junction of Charles with their enemies destroyed their growing hopes in the Commons, where the prospects of a speedy peace on Presbyterian terms at once swelled the majority of their opponents. The two Houses laid their conditions of peace before the King without a dream of resistance from one who seemed to have placed himself at their mercy. They required for the Parliament the command of the army and fleet for twenty years; the exclusion of all "Malignants," or royalists who had taken part in the war, from civil and military office; the abolition of Episcopacy; and the establishment of a Presbyterian Church. Of toleration or liberty of conscience they said not a word.

The King's hopes.

The Scots, whose army had fallen back with its royal prize to Newcastle, pressed these terms on the King "with tears." His friends, and even the Queen, urged their acceptance. But the aim of Charles was simply delay. His surrender had not brought about the results he had hoped for; but he believed that time and the dissensions of his enemies were fighting for him. "I am not without hope," he wrote coolly, "that I shall be able to draw either the Presbyterians or the Independents to side with me for extirpating one another, so that I shall be really King again." With this end he refused the terms offered by the Houses. His refusal was a crushing defeat for the Presbyterians. "What will become of us," asked one of them, "now that the King has rejected our proposals?" "What would have become of us," retorted an Independent, "had he accepted them?" The vigour of

Holles and the Conservative leaders in the Parliament rallied however to a bolder effort. It was plain that the King's game lay in balancing the army against the Parliament, and that the Houses could hope for no submission to these terms so long as the New Model was on foot. Nor could they venture in its presence to enforce religious uniformity, or to deal as they would have wished to deal with the theories of religious freedom which were every day becoming more popular. But while the Scotch army lay at Newcastle, and while it held the King in its hands, they could not insist on dismissing their own soldiers. It was only a withdrawal of the Scots from England and their transfer of the King's person into the hands of the Houses that would enable them to free themselves from the pressure of their own soldiers by disbanding the New Model.

Surrender of the King.

In his endeavour to bring these two measures about Holles met with an unexpected success. Hopeless of success in the projects of accommodation which they laid before the King, and unable to bring him into Scotland in face of the refusal of the General Assembly to receive a sovereign who would not swear to the Covenant, the Scottish army in January 1647 accepted £400,000 in discharge of its claims, handed Charles over to a committee of the Houses, and marched back over the Border. The success of their diplomacy restored the confidence of the Houses. The Presbyterian leaders looked on themselves as masters of the King, and they resolved to assert their mastery over the New Model and the sectaries. They voted that the army should be disbanded, and that a new army should be raised for the suppression of the Irish rebellion with Presbyterian officers at its head. It was in vain that the men protested against being severed from "officers that we love," and that the Council of Officers strove to gain time by pressing on the Parliament the danger of mutiny. Holles and his fellow-leaders were resolute, and their ecclesiastical legislation showed the end at which their

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resolution aimed. Direct enforcement of conformity was impossible till the New Model was disbanded; but the Parliament pressed on in the work of providing the machinery for enforcing it as soon as the army was gone. Vote after vote ordered the setting up of Presbyteries throughout the country, and the first-fruits of these efforts were seen in the Presbyterian organization of London, and in the first meeting of its Synod at St. Paul's. Even the officers on Fairfax's staff were ordered to take the Covenant.

Temper of the New Model.

All hung however on the disbanding of the New Model, and the New Model showed no will to disband itself. Its attitude can only fairly be judged by remembering what the conquerors of Naseby really were. They were soldiers of a different class and of a different temper from the soldiers of any other army that the world has seen. Their ranks were filled for the most part with young farmers and tradesmen of the lower sort, maintaining themselves, for their pay was twelve months in arrear, mainly at their own cost. They had been specially picked as "honest," or religious men, and, whatever enthusiasm or fanaticism they may have shown, their very enemies acknowledged the order and piety of their camp. They looked on themselves not as swordsmen, to be caught up and flung away at the will of a paymaster, but as men who had left farm and merchandise at a direct call from God. A great work had been given them to do, and the call bound them till it was done. Kingcraft, as Charles was hoping, might yet restore tyranny to the throne. A more immediate danger threatened that liberty of conscience which was to them "the ground of the quarrel, and for which so many of their friends' lives had been lost, and so much of their own blood had been spilt." They would wait before disbanding till these liberties were secured, and if need came they would again act to secure them. But their resolve sprang from no pride in the brute force of the sword they wielded. On the contrary, as they

pleaded passionately at the bar of the Commons, "on becoming soldiers we have not ceased to be citizens." Their aims and proposals throughout were purely those of citizens, and of citizens who were ready the moment their aim was won to return peacefully to their homes. Thought and discussion had turned the army into a vast Parliament, a Parliament which regarded itself as a representative of "godly" men in as high a degree as the Parliament at Westminster, and which must have become every day more conscious of its superiority in political capacity to its rival. Ireton, the moving spirit of the New Model, had no equal as a statesman in St. Stephen's: nor is it possible to compare the large and far-sighted proposals of the army with the blind and narrow policy of the two Houses. Whatever we may think of the means by which the New Model sought its aims, we must in justice remember that, so far as those aims went, the New Model was in the right. For the last two hundred years England has been doing little more than carrying out in a slow and tentative way the scheme of political and religious reform which the army propounded at the close of the Civil War.

Its seisure of the King.

It was not till the rejection of the officers' proposals had left little hope of conciliation that the army acted, but its action was quick and decisive. It set aside for all political purposes the Council of Officers, by which its action had hitherto been directed, and elected a new Council of Adjutators or Assistants, two members being named by each regiment, which summoned a general meeting of the army at Triploe Heath, where the proposals of pay and disbanding made by the Parliament were rejected with cries of "Justice." While the army was gathering, in fact, the Adjutators had taken a step which put submission out of the question. A rumour that the King was to be removed to London, a new army raised by the Parliament in his name, and a new civil war begun, roused the soldiers to madness. Five hundred troopers appeared on the fourth of

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June before Holmby House, where the King was residing in charge of Parliamentary Commissioners, and displaced its guards. "Where is your commission for this act?" Charles asked the cornet who commanded them. "It is behind me," said Joyce, pointing to his soldiers. "It is written in very fine and legible characters," laughed the King. The seizure had in fact been previously concerted between Charles and the Adjutators. "I will part willingly," he told Joyce, "if the soldiers confirm all that you have promised me. You will exact from me nothing that offends my conscience or my honour." "It is not our maxim," replied the cornet, "to constrain the conscience of any one, still less that of our King." After a first burst of terror at the news, the Parliament fell furiously on Cromwell, who had relinquished his command and quitted the army before the close of the war, and had ever since been employed as a mediator between the two parties. The charge of having incited the mutiny fell before his vehement protest, but he was driven to seek refuge with the army, and on the twenty-fifth of June it was in full march upon London. Its demands were expressed with perfect clearness in an "Humble Representation" which it addressed to the Houses. "We desire a settlement of the Peace of the kingdom and of the liberties of the subject according to the votes and declarations of Parliament. We desire no alteration in the civil government: as little do we desire to interrupt or in the least to intermeddle with the settling of the Presbyterial government." What they demanded in religious matters was toleration; but "not to open a way to licentious living under pretence of obtaining ease for tender consciences, we profess, as ever, in these things when the state has made a settlement we have nothing to say, but to submit or suffer." It was with a view to such a settlement that they demanded the expulsion of eleven members from the Commons, with Holles at their head, whom the soldiers charged with stirring up strife between the army and the Parliament, and with a design

of renewing the civil war. After fruitless negotiations the New Model drew close upon London; the terror of the Londoners forced the eleven to withdraw; and the Houses named Commissioners to treat on the questions at issue.

The Army negotiates with the King.

Though Fairfax and Cromwell had been forced from their position as mediators into a hearty co-operation with the army, its political direction rested at this moment with Cromwell's son-in-law, Henry Ireton, and Ireton looked for a real settlement, not to the Parliament, but to the King. "There must be some difference," he urged bluntly, "between conquerors and conquered;" but the terms which he laid before Charles were terms of studied moderation. The vindictive spirit which the Parliament had shown against the Royalists and the Church disappeared in the terms exacted by the New Model; and the army contented itself with the banishment of seven leading "delinquents," a general Act of Oblivion for the rest, the withdrawal of all coercive power from the clergy, the control of Parliament over the military and naval forces for ten years, and its nomination of the great officers of State. Behind these demands however came a masterly and comprehensive plan of political reform which had already been sketched by the army in the "Humble Representation," with which it had begun its march on London. Belief and worship were to be free to all. Acts enforcing the use of the Prayer-book, or attendance at Church, or the enforcement of the Covenant were to be repealed. Even Catholics, whatever other restraints might be imposed, were to be freed from the bondage of compulsory worship. Parliaments were to be triennial, and the House of Commons to be reformed by a fairer distribution of seats and of electoral rights; taxation was to be readjusted; legal procedure simplified; a crowd of political, commercial, and judicial privileges abolished. Ireton believed that Charles could be "so managed" (says Mrs. Hutchinson) "as to comply with the public good of his people after he

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could no longer uphold his violent will." But Charles was equally dead to the moderation and to the wisdom of this great Act of Settlement. He saw in the crisis nothing but an opportunity of balancing one party against another; and believed that the army had more need of his aid than he of the army's. "You cannot do without me—you are lost if I do not support you," he said to Ireton as he pressed his proposals. "You have an intention to be the arbitrator between us and the Parliament," Ireton quietly replied, "and we mean to be so between the Parliament and your Majesty."

Flight of the King.

But the King's tone was soon explained. If London had been panic-stricken at the approach of the army, its panic soon disappeared. The great city was goaded to action by the humiliation of the Parliament, and still more by the triumph of religious liberty which seemed to be approaching through the negotiations of the army with the King. A mob of Londoners broke into the House of Commons, and forced its members to recall the eleven. The bulk of Vane's party, some fourteen peers and a hundred commoners, fled to the army; while those who remained at Westminster prepared for an open struggle with it and invited Charles to return to London. But the news no sooner reached the camp than the army was again on the march. "In two days," Cromwell said coolly, "the city will be in our hands." On the sixth of August the soldiers entered London in triumph and restored the fugitive members; the eleven were once more expelled; and the army leaders resumed their negotiations with the King. The indignation of the soldiers at his delays and intrigues made their task hourly more difficult: but Cromwell, who now threw his whole weight on Ireton's side, clung to the hope of accommodation with a passionate tenacity. His mind, conservative by tradition, and above all practical in temper, saw the political difficulties which would follow on the abolition of Monarchy, and in spite of the King's evasions he persisted in negotiating with him.

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But Cromwell stood almost alone. The Parliament refused to accept Ireton's proposals as a basis of peace; Charles still evaded; and the army grew restless and suspicious. There were cries for a wide reform, for the abolition of the House of Peers, for a new House of Commons; and the adjutators called on the Council of Officers to discuss the question of abolishing Royalty itself. Cromwell was never braver than when he faced the gathering storm, forbade the discussion, adjourned the Council, and sent the officers to their regiments. But the strain was too great to last long, and Charles was still resolute to "play his game." He was in fact so far from being in earnest in his negotiation with Cromwell and Ireton that at the moment they were risking their lives for him he was conducting another and equally delusive negotiation with the Parliament, fomenting the discontent in London, and preparing for a fresh royalist rising. What he still more counted on was aid from the north. The intervention of the Scots had ruined his cause, but their intervention might again restore it. The practical suspension of the Covenant and the triumph of the party of religious liberty in England had produced a violent reaction across the Tweed. Argyle and the zealous Presbyterians still clung to the alliance between the two countries, though it disappointed their hopes; but Hamilton, who had now become a Duke, put himself at the head of the more moderate religionists, and carried the elections for a new Parliament. Charles at once saw the results of the Duke's success. "The two nations," he wrote joyously, "will soon be at war." All that was needed for the success of these schemes was his own liberty; and in November, 1647, in the midst of their hopes of an accommodation, the army leaders learned that they had been duped throughout, and that the King had fled.

The second Civil War

The flight fanned the excitement of the New Model into frenzy, and only the courage of Cromwell averted an open mutiny in its gathering at Ware. But even Cromwell was powerless to break the spirit which now pervaded the

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soldiers, and the King's perfidy left him without resoures. "The King is a man of great parts and great understanding," he said, "but so great a dissembler and so false a man that he is not to be trusted." The danger from his escape indeed soon passed away. By a strange error Charles had ridden from Hampton Court to the Isle of Wight, perhaps with some hope from the sympathy of Colonel Hammond, the Governor of Carisbrook Castle, and again found himself a prisoner. But the wider perils remained. Foiled in his effort to put himself at the head of the new civil war, the King set himself to organize it from his prison; and while again opening delusive negotiations with the two Houses he signed a secret treaty with the Scots for the invasion of the realm. All that Hamilton needed to bring the new Scotch Parliament to an active support of the King was his assent to a stipulation for the re-establishment of Presbytery in England. This Charles at last brought himself to give in the spring of 1648, and the Scots at once ordered an army to be levied for his support. In England the whole of the conservative party, with many of the most conspicuous members of the Long Parliament at its head, was drifting in its horror of the religious and political changes which seemed impending towards the King; and at the close of May the news from Scotland gave the signal for fitful insurrections in almost every quarter. London was only held down by main force, old officers of the Parliament unfurled the royal flag in South Wales, and surprized Pembroke. The seizure of Berwick and Carlisle opened a way for the Scotch invasion. Kent, Essex, and Hertford broke out in revolt. The fleet in the Downs sent their captains on shore, hoisted the King's pennon, and blockaded the Thames.

The Houses and the Army.

"The hour is come," cried Cromwell, "for the Parliament to save the kingdom and to govern alone." But the Parliament showed no will to "govern alone." It looked on the rising and the intervention of the Scots as means of freeing it from the control under which it had been

writhing since the expulsion of the eleven. It took advantage of the crisis to profess its adherence to Monarchy, to re-open the negotiations it had broken off with the King, and to deal the fiercest blow at religious freedom which it had ever received. The Presbyterians flocked back to their seats; and an "Ordinance for the Suppression of Blasphemies and Heresies," which Vane and Cromwell had long held at bay, was passed by triumphant majorities. Any man—ran this terrible statute—denying the doctrine of the Trinity or of the Divinity of Christ, or that the books of Scripture are "the Word of God," or the resurrection of the body, or a future day of judgement, and refusing on trial to abjure his heresy, "shall suffer the pain of death." Any man declaring (amidst a long list of other errors) "that man by nature hath free will to turn to God," that there is a Purgatory, that images are lawful, that infant baptism is unlawful; any one denying the obligation of observing the Lord's day, or asserting "that the Church government by Presbytery is anti-Christian or unlawful," shall. on a refusal to renounce his errors; "be commanded to prison." It was plain that the Presbyterians counted on the King's success to resume their policy of conformity, and had Charles been free, or the New Model disbanded, their hopes would probably have been realized.

But Charles was still safe at Carisbrook; and the New Model was facing fiercely the danger which surrounded it. The wanton renewal of the war at a moment when all tended to peace swept from the mind of Fairfax and Cromwell, as from that of the army at large, every thought of reconciliation with the King. Soldiers and generals were at last bound together again in a stern resolve. On the eve of their march against the revolt all gathered in a solemn prayer-meeting, and came "to a very clear and joint resolution, 'That it was our duty if ever the Lord brought us back again in peace, to call Charles Stuart, that man of blood, to account for the

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blood he has shed and mischief he has done to his utmost against the Lord's cause and people in this poor nation.'" The stern resolve was followed by vigorous action. In a few days Fairfax had trampled down the Kentish insurgents, and had prisoned those of the eastern counties within the walls of Colchester, while Cromwell drove the Welsh insurgents within those of Pembroke. Both towns however held stubbornly out; and though a rising under Lord Holland in the neighbourhood of London was easily put down, there was no force left to stem the inroad of the Scots, who poured over the Border at the opening of July some twenty thousand strong. Luckily the surrender of Pembroke at this critical moment set Cromwell free. Pushing rapidly northward with five thousand men, he called in a force under Lambert which had been gallantly hanging on the Scottish flank, and pushed over the Yorkshire hills into the valley of the Ribble, where the Duke of Hamilton, reinforced by three thousand royalists of the north, had advanced as far as Preston. With an army which now numbered ten thousand men, Cromwell poured down on the flank of the Duke's straggling line of march, attacked the Scots on the seventeenth of August as they retired behind the Ribble, passed the river with them, cut their rearguard to pieces at Wigan, forced the defile at Warrington, where the flying enemy made a last and desperate stand, and drove their foot to surrender, while Lambert hunted down Hamilton and the horse. Fresh from its victory, the New Model pushed over the Border, while the peasants of Ayrshire and the west rose in a "Whiggamore raid" (notable as the first event in which we find the name "Whig," which is possibly the same as our "Whey," and conveys a taunt against the "sour-milk" faces of the fanatical Ayrshiremen), and, marching upon Edinburgh, in September, dispersed the royalist party and again installed Argyle in power.

Demand of justice on the King.

Argyle welcomed Cromwell as a deliverer, but the

victorious general had hardly entered Edinburgh when he was recalled by pressing news from the south. The temper with which the Parliament had met the royalist revolt was, as we have seen, widely different from that of the army. It had recalled the eleven members, and had passed the Ordinance against heresy. At the moment of the victory at Preston the Lords were discussing charges of treason against Cromwell, while in September commissioners were again sent to the Isle of Wight, in spite of the resistance of the Independents, to conclude peace with the King. Royalists and Presbyterians alike pressed Charles to grasp the easy terms which were now offered him. But if his hopes from Scotland had utterly broken down, they had given place to hopes of a new war with the aid of an army from Ireland; and the negotiators of the Houses saw forty days wasted in useless chicanery. "Nothing," Charles wrote to his friends, "is changed in my designs." With Ireland and Scotland on his side, with royalists still in arms in the eastern counties, with the Houses at issue with the army, and as it seemed on the point of yielding unconditionally to the King in their dread of organic changes he believed that the hour of his triumph was at last at hand. But the surrender of Colchester to Fairfax in August and Cromwell's convention with Argyle had now set free the army, and it at once struck fiercely at its foes. Petitions from its regiments demanded "justice on the King." A fresh "Remonstrance" from the Council of Officers called for the election of a new Parliament; for electoral reform; for the recognition of the supremacy of the Houses "in all things"; for the change of kingship, should it be retained, into a magistracy elected by the Parliament, and without veto on its proceedings. Above all they demanded "that the capital and grand author of our troubles, by whose commissions, commands, and procurements, and in whose behalf and for whose interest only, of will and power, all our wars and troubles have been, with all the miseries attending them, may be specially

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brought to justice for the treason, blood, and mischief he is therein guilty of."

The demand drove the Houses to despair. That the King should be forced back into legal courses, and if need be forced by stress of arms, seemed to the bulk of the English gentry who were ranged on the Parliament side a necessity, though a hard necessity. But the tradition of loyalty, of reverence for the crown, was strong even in the men who had fought hardest against Charles. They shrank with horror from the sight of a king at the bar of a court of justice, or yet more on the scaffold. The demand for a new Parliament was hardly less horrible. A new Parliament meant the rule of the sectaries, a revolution in the whole political and religious system of the realm. To give way to Charles altogether, to surrender all that the war had gained, seemed better than this. Their reply to the Remonstrance was to accept the King's concessions, unimportant as they were, as a basis of peace. The calculations of Charles were verified by the surrender of his old opponents; but the surrender came too late to save either Parliament or King. The step was accepted by the soldiers as a defiance. On the thirtieth of November Charles was again seized by a troop of horse, and carried off to Hurst Castle, while a letter from Fairfax announced the march of his army upon London. "We shall know now," said Vane, as the troops took their post round the Houses of Parliament, "who is on the side of the King, and who on the side of the people." But the terror of the army proved weaker among the members than the agonized loyalty which strove to save the monarchy and the Church; and a large majority in both Houses still voted for the acceptance of the terms which Charles had offered. The next morning, that of the sixth of December, saw Colonel Pride at the door of the House of Commons with a list of forty members of the majority in his hands. The Council of Officers had resolved to exclude them, and as each member made his appearance

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he was arrested, and put in confinement. "By what right do you act?" a member asked. "By the right of the sword," Hugh Peters is said to have replied. The House was still resolute, but on the following morning forty more members were excluded, and the rest gave way.

Ruin of the Parliament.

The sword had fallen; and the old system of English government sank helplessly beneath the blow. The two great powers which had waged this bitter conflict, the Parliament and the Monarchy, suddenly disappeared. The expulsion of one hundred and forty members, in a word of the majority of the existing House, reduced the Commons to a name. The remnant who remained to co-operate with the army were, in the coarse imagery of popular speech but the "rump" of a Parliament. Their will was no longer representative of the will of the country; their acts were no longer national acts. They were simply the acts of a body of partizans who had the luck to find themselves on the side of the sword. While the House of Commons dwindled to a sham, the House of Lords passed away altogether. The effect of Pride's purge was seen in a resolution of the Rump for the trial of Charles and the nomination on the first of January, 1649, of a Court of one hundred and fifty Commissioners to conduct it, with John Bradshaw, a lawyer of eminence, at their head. The rejection of this Ordinance by the few peers who remained brought about a fresh resolution from the members who remained in the Lower House, "that the People are, under God, the original of all just power; that the Commons of England in Parliament assembled —being chosen by, and representing, the People—have the supreme power in this nation; and that whatsoever is enacted and declared for law by the Commons in Parliament assembled hath the force of a law, and all the people of this nation are concluded thereby, although the consent and concurrence of the King or House of Peers be not had hereunto."

Death of the King.

And with the ruin of the Parliament went the ruin of

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the Monarchy. On the twentieth of January Charles appeared before Bradshaw's Court only to deny its competence and to refuse to plead; but thirty-two witnesses were examined to satisfy the consciences of his judges, and it was not till the fifth day of the trial that he was condemned to death as a tyrant, traitor, murderer, and enemy of his country. The popular excitement vented itself in cries of "Justice," or "God save your Majesty," as the trial went on, but all save the loud outcries of the soldiers was hushed as, on the 30th of January, 1649, Charles passed to his doom. The dignity which he had failed to preserve in his long jangling with Bradshaw and the judges returned at the call of death. Whatever had been the faults and follies of his life, "he nothing common did, nor mean, upon that memorable scene." Two masked executioners awaited the King as he mounted the scaffold, which had been erected outside one of the windows of the Banqueting House at Whitehall; the streets and roofs were thronged with spectators; and a strong body of soldiers stood drawn up beneath. His head fell at the first blow, and as the executioner lifted it to the sight of all a groan of pity and horror burst from the silent crowd.

Abolition of Monarchy.

The delays and hesitation which marked the action of the Commons on the King's death showed how stunned they were by the revolution which they were driven to bring about. To replace Charles by a new king was impossible. His son alone would be owned as sovereign by the bulk of the nation; and no friendship was possible between the men who now held England in their grasp and the son of the man they had sent to the block. But it was only slowly that they bowed to necessity. It was not till the seventeenth of March that monarchy was formally abolished; and two months more elapsed before the passing of that memorable Act of the nineteenth of May which declared "that the People of England and of all the dominions and territories thereunto belonging are, and shall be, and are

hereby constituted, made, established, and confirmed, to be a Commonwealth and Free State, and shall henceforth be governed as a Commonwealth and Free State by the supreme authority of this nation, the representatives of the People in Parliament, and by such as they shall appoint and constitute officers and ministers for the good of the People, and that without any King or House of Lords."

CHAPTER XI.

THE COMMONWEALTH.

1649—1653.

Dangers of the Commonwealth.

THE news of the King's death was received throughout Europe with a thrill of horror. The Czar of Russia chased the English envoy from his court. The ambassador of France was withdrawn on the proclamation of the Republic. The Protestant powers of the Continent seemed more anxious than any to disavow all connexion with a Protestant people who had brought their King to the block. Holland took the lead in acts of open hostility to the new power as soon as the news of the execution reached the Hague. The States-General waited solemnly on the Prince of Wales, who took the title of Charles the Second, and recognized him as "Majesty," while they refused an audience to the English envoys. Their Stadtholder, his brother-in-law, the Prince of Orange, was supported by popular sympathy in the aid and encouragement he afforded to Charles; and eleven ships of the English fleet, which had found a refuge at the Hague ever since their revolt from the Parliament, were suffered to sail under Rupert's command, and to render the seas unsafe for English traders. The danger however was far greater nearer home. In Scotland even the zealous Presbyterians whom Cromwell had restored to power refused to follow England on its rejection of monarchy. Argyle and his fellow-leaders proclaimed Charles the Second as King on the news of his father's death; and at once despatched an embassy to the Hague to invite him to ascend the throne. In Ireland

the factions who ever since the rebellion had turned the country into a chaos, the old Irish Catholics or native party under Owen Roe O'Neil, the Catholics of the English Pale, the Episcopalian Royalists, the Presbyterian Royalists of the north, had at last been bought to some sort of union by the diplomacy of Ormond; and Ormond called on Charles to land at once in a country where he would find three-fourths of its people devoted to his cause.

England and the Commonwealth.

Of the dangers which threatened the new Commonwealth some were more apparent than real. The rivalry of France and Spain, both anxious for its friendship, secured it from the hostility of the greater powers of the Continent; and the ill-will of Holland could be delayed, if not averted, by negotiations. The acceptance of the Covenant was insisted on by Scotland before it would formally receive Charles as its ruler, and nothing but necessity would induce him to comply with such a demand. On the side of Ireland the danger was more pressing, and an army of twelve thousand men was set apart for a vigorous prosecution of the Irish war. But the real difficulties were the difficulties at home. The death of Charles gave fresh vigour to the royalist cause; and the loyalty which it revived was stirred to enthusiasm by the publication of the "Eikon Basilike," a work really due to the ingenuity of Dr. Gauden, a Presbyterian minister, but which was believed to have been composed by the King himself in his later hours of captivity, and which reflected with admirable skill the hopes, the suffering, and the piety of the royal "martyr." For a moment there were dreams of a rising, which had to be roughly checked by the execution of the Duke of Hamilton and Lords Holland and Capell, who had till now been confined in the Tower. But the popular disaffection was a far more serious mat ter than these royalist intrigues. It was soon plain that the revolution which had struck down Parliament and monarchy alike was without sanction from the nation at

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large. The government of the country had been provided for by the creation of a Council of State, consisting of forty-one members selected from what was left of the Commons, and who were entrusted with full executive power at home and abroad. But if the Rump consented to profit by the work of the soldiers, it showed no will to signify its approval of it. A majority of the members of the Council declined the oath offered to them at their earliest meeting, pledging them to an approval of the King's death and the establishment of the Commonwealth. In the nation at large the repudiation of the army's work was universal. Half the judges retired from the bench. Thousands of refusals met the demand of an engagement to be faithful to the Republic which was made from all beneficed clergymen and public functionaries. It was not till May, and even then in spite of the ill-will of the citizens, that the Council ventured to proclaim the Commonwealth in London.

Designs of the Rump.

It was plain that England had no mind to see her old parliamentary liberties set aside for a military rule. But in truth the army itself never dreamed of establishing such a rule. Still less did it dream of leaving the conduct of affairs in the hands of the small body of members who still called themselves the House of Commons, a body which numbered hardly a hundred, and whose average attendance was little more than fifty. In reducing it by "Pride's Purge" to the mere shadow of a House the army had never contemplated its continuance as a permanent assembly: it had, in fact, insisted as a condition of even its temporary continuance that it should prepare a bill for the summoning of a fresh Parliament. The plan put forward by the Council of Officers is still interesting as the basis of many later efforts towards parliamentary reform. It advised a dissolution in the spring, the assembling every two years of a new Parliament consisting of four hundred members, elected by all householders rateable to the poor, and a redistribution of seats which would have given the

privilege of representation to every place of importance. Paid military officers and civil officials were excluded from election. The plan was apparently accepted by the Commons, and a bill based on it was again and again discussed. But it was soon whispered about that the House had no mind to dissolve itself. Whatever might be the hopes of the soldiers or their leaders, the shrewder statesmen who sate at Westminster knew that the country was eager to undo the work that had been done; and that the first effort of a fairly chosen Parliament would be to put an end to the Commonwealth and to religious liberty. Their aim therefore was to gain time; to continue their rule till what they looked on as a passing phase of national feeling had disappeared, and till the great results which they looked for from their policy both at home and abroad had reconciled the nation to the new system of government. In a witty paraphrase of the story of Moses, Henry Martyn was soon to picture the Commonwealth as a new-born and delicate babe, and hint that "no one is so proper to bring it up as the mother who has brought it into the world." Secret as this purpose was kept, suspicions of it no sooner stole abroad than the popular discontent found a mouthpiece in John Lilburne, a brave, hot-headed soldier, and the excitement of the army appeared in a formidable mutiny in May. But the leaders of the army set all suspicion aside. "You must cut these people in pieces," Cromwell broke out in the Council of State, "or they will cut you in pieces;" and a forced march of fifty miles to Burford enabled him to burst with Fairfax on the mutinous regiments at midnight, and to stamp out the revolt.

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But resolute as he was against disorder, Cromwell went honestly with the army in its demand of a new Parliament; he believed, and in his harangue to the mutineers he pledged himself to the assertion, that the House purposed to dissolve itself. In spite of the delays thrown in the way of the bill for a new Representative body Cromwell

Cromwell in Ireland

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entertained no serious suspicion of the Parliament's design when he was summoned to Ireland by a series of royalist successes which left only Dublin in the hands of the Parliamentary forces. With Scotland threatening war, and a naval struggle impending with Holland, it was necessary that the work of the army in Ireland should be done quickly. The temper too of Cromwell and his soldiers was one of vengeance, for the horror of the Irish massacre remained living in every English breast, and the revolt was looked upon as a continuance of the massacre. "We are come," he said on his landing, "to ask an account of the innocent blood that hath been shed, and to endeavour to bring to an account all who by appearing in arms shall justify the same." A sortie from Dublin had already broken up Ormond's siege of the capital; and feeling himself powerless to keep the field before the new army, the Marquis had thrown his best troops, three thousand Englishmen under Sir Arthur Aston, as a garrison into Drogheda. Cromwell landed in Ireland on the fifteenth of August, 1649; and his storm of Drogheda in September was the first of a series of awful massacres. The garrison fought bravely, and repulsed the first attack; but a second drove Aston and his force back to the Mill-Mount. "Our men getting up to them," ran Cromwell's terrible despatch, "were ordered by me to put them all to the sword. And indeed, being in the heat of action, I forbade them to spare any that were in arms in the town, and I think that night they put to death about two thousand men." A few fled to St. Peter's church, "whereupon I ordered the steeple to be fired, where one of them was heard to say in the midst of the flames: 'God damn me, I burn, I burn.'" "In the church itself nearly one thousand were put to the sword. I believe all their friars were knocked on the head promiscuously but two," but these were the sole exceptions to the rule of killing the soldiers only. At a later time Cromwell challenged his enemies to give "an instance of one man since my coming into Ireland, not in arms,

massacred, destroyed, or banished." But for soldiers there was no mercy. Of the remnant who surrendered through hunger, "when they submitted, their officers were knocked on the head, every tenth man of the soldiers killed, and the rest shipped for the Barbadoes." "I am persuaded," the despatch ends, "that this is a righteous judgement of God upon these barbarous wretches who have imbrued their hands in so much innocent blood, and that it will tend to prevent the effusion of blood for the future."

Charles and the Scots.

A detachment sufficed to relieve Derry and to quiet Ulster; and Cromwell turned to the south, where as stout a defence was followed by as terrible a massacre at Wexford. A fresh success at Ross brought him to Waterford; but the city held stubbornly out, disease thinned his army, where there was scarce an officer who had not been sick, and the general himself was arrested by illness. At last the tempestuous weather drove him into winter quarters at Cork with his work half done. The winter of 1649 was one of terrible anxiety. The Parliament was showing less and less inclination to dissolve itself, and was meeting the growing discontent by a stricter censorship of the press and a fruitless prosecution of John Lilburne. English commerce was being ruined by the piracies of Rupert's fleet, which now anchored at Kinsale to support the royalist cause in Ireland. The energy of Vane indeed had already re-created a navy, squadrons of which were being despatched into the British seas, the Mediterranean, and the Levant; and Colonel Blake, who had distinguished himself by his heroic defence of Taunton during the war, was placed at the head of a fleet which drove Rupert from the Irish coast, and finally blockaded him in the Tagus. But even the energy of Vane quailed before the danger which now broke on England from the Scots. "One must go and die there," the young King cried at the news of Ormond's defeat before Dublin, "for it is shameful for me to live elsewhere." But his ardour for an Irish campaign cooled as Cromwell marched

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from victory to victory; and from the isle of Jersey, which alone remained faithful to him of all his southern dominions, Charles renewed the negotiations with Scotland which his hopes from Ireland had broken. They were again delayed by a proposal on the part of Montrose to attack the very Government with whom his master was negotiating; but the failure and death of the Marquis in the spring of 1650 forced Charles to accept the Presbyterian conditions; and while an army was raised in the north, the young King prepared to cross to his Scottish dominions.

Cromwell in Scotland.

Dismayed as they were, the English leaders resolved to anticipate the danger by attacking the new enemy in his own home; but the Lord-General Fairfax, while willing to defend England against a Scotch invasion, scrupled to take the lead in an invasion of Scotland. The Council recalled Cromwell from Ireland, but his cooler head saw that there was yet time to finish his work in the west. During the winter he had been busily preparing for a new campaign, and it was only after the storm of Clonmell and the overthrow of the Irish army under Hugh O'Neill in the hottest fight the army had yet fought, that he embarked for England. The new Lord-General entered London amidst the shouts of a great multitude; and in July, 1650, but a month after Charles had landed on the shores of Scotland, the English army crossed the Tweed fifteen thousand men strong. But the terror of his massacres in Ireland hung round its leader, the country was deserted as he advanced, and he was forced to cling for provisions to a fleet which sailed along the coast. The Scotch general, Leslie, with a larger force, refused battle, and lay obstinately in his lines between Edinburgh and Leith. A march of the English army round his position to the slopes of the Pentlands only brought about a change of the Scottish front; and as Cromwell fell back baffled upon Dunbar, Leslie encamped upon the heights above the town, and cut off the English retreat along the

coast by the seizure of Cockburnspath. His post was almost unassailable, while the soldiers of Cromwell were sick and starving; and their general had resolved on an embarcation of his forces when he saw in the dusk of evening signs of movement in the Scottish camp. Leslie's caution had at last been overpowered by the zeal of the preachers, and on the morning of the third of September the Scotch army moved down to the lower ground between the hillside on which it was encamped and a little brook which covered the English front. Leslie's horse was far in advance of the main body, and it had hardly reached the level ground when Cromwell in the dim dawn flung his whole force upon it. "They run, I profess they run!" he cried as the Scotch horse broke after a desperate resistance, and threw into confusion the foot who were hurrying to its aid. Then, as the sun rose over the mist of the morning, he added in nobler words: "Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered! Like as the mist vanisheth, so shalt Thou drive them away!" In less than an hour the victory was complete. The defeat at once became a rout; ten thousand prisoners were taken, with all the baggage and guns; three thousand were slain, with scarce any loss on the part of the conquerors. Leslie reached Edinburgh, a general without an army.

Break with Holland.

The effect of Dunbar was at once seen in the attitude of the Continental powers. Spain hastened to recognize the Republic, and Holland offered its alliance. But Cromwell was watching with anxiety the growing discontent at home. He was anxious for a "settlement." He knew that for such a settlement a new Parliament was necessary, and that England would never consent to be ruled against her will by the mere rump of members gathered at Westminster. Yet every day made it plainer that it was their purpose to continue to rule her. The general amnesty claimed by Ireton and the bill for the Parliament's dissolution still hung on hand; the reform of the courts of justice, which had been pressed by the army, failed before

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the obstacles thrown in its way by the lawyers in the Commons. "Relieve the oppressed," Cromwell wrote from Dunbar, "hear the groans of poor prisoners. Be pleased to reform the abuses of all professions. If there be any one that makes many poor to make a few rich, that suits not a Commonwealth." But the House was seeking to turn the current of public opinion in favour of its own continuance by a great diplomatic triumph. It resolved secretly on the wild project of bringing about a union between England and Holland, and it took advantage of Cromwell's victory to despatch Oliver St. John with a stately embassy to the Hague. His rejection of an alliance and Treaty of Commerce which the Dutch offered was followed by the disclosure of the English proposal of union. The proposal was at once refused by the States and the envoys, who returned angrily to the Parliament attributed their failure to the posture of affairs in Scotland. Charles was preparing there for a new campaign. Humiliation after humiliation had been heaped on the young King since he landed in his northern realm. He had subscribed to the covenant; he had listened to sermons and scoldings from the ministers; he was called on at last to sign a declaration that acknowledged the tyranny of his father and the idolatry of his mother. Hardened and shameless as he was, the young King for a moment recoiled. "I could never look my mother in the face again," he cried, "after signing such a paper;" but he signed. He was still however a King only in name, shut out from the Council and the army, with his friends excluded from all part in government or the war. But he was freed by the victory of Dunbar. "I believe that the King will set up on his own score now," Cromwell wrote after his victory, as he advanced to occupy Edinburgh while the royal forces fell back upon Stirling and Perth. With the overthrow of Leslie in fact the power of Argyle and the narrow Presbyterians whom he led came to an end. Hamilton, the brother and

successor of the Duke who had been captured at Preston, brought back the Royalists to the camp, and Charles insisted on taking part in the Council and on being crowned at Scone.

Worcester.

Master of Edinburgh, but foiled in an attack on Stirling, Cromwell waited through the winter and the long spring of 1651, while intestine feuds broke up the nation opposed to him, and while the stricter Covenanters retired sulkily from the King's army on the return of the "Malignants," the royalists of the earlier war, to its ranks. With summer the campaign recommenced, but Leslie again fell back on his system of positions, and Cromwell, finding his camp at Stirling unassailable, crossed into Fife and left the road open to the south. The bait was taken. In spite of Leslie's counsels Charles resolved to invade England, and call the royalist party again to revolt. He was soon in full march through Lancashire upon the Severn, with the English horse under Lambert hanging on his rear, and the English foot hastening by York and Coventry to close the road to London. "We have done to the best of our judgement," Cromwell replied to the angry alarm of the Parliament, "knowing that if some issue were not put to this business it would occasion another winter's war." At Coventry he learned Charles's position, and swept round by Evesham upon Worcester, where the Scotch King was encamped. Throwing half his force across the river, Cromwell attacked the town on both sides on the third of September, the anniversary of his victory at Dunbar. He led the van in person, and was "the first to set foot on the enemy's ground." When Charles descended from the cathedral tower to fling himself on the division which remained eastward of the Severn, Cromwell hurried back across the river, and was soon "riding in the midst of the fire." For four or five hours, he told the Parliament, "it was as stiff a contest as ever I have seen;" for though the Scots were outnumbered and beaten into the city, they gave no answer but shot to offers of quarter, and

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it was not till nightfall that all was over. The loss of the victors was as usual inconsiderable. The conquered lost six thousand men, and all their baggage and artillery. Leslie was among the prisoners: Hamilton among the dead. Charles himself fled from the field; and after months of strange wanderings and adventures made his escape to France.

Activity of the Parliament.

"Now that the King is dead and his son defeated," Cromwell said gravely to the Parliament, "I think it necessary to come to a settlement." But the settlement which had been promised after Naseby was still as distant as ever after Worcester. The bill for dissolving the present Parliament, though Cromwell pressed it in person, was only passed, after bitter opposition, by a majority of two: and even this success had to be purchased by a compromise which permitted the House to sit for three years more. Internal affairs were almost at a deadlock. The Parliament appointed committees to prepare plans for legal reforms or for ecclesiastical reforms, but it did nothing to carry them into effect. It was overpowered by the crowd of affairs which the confusion of the war had thrown into its hands, by confiscations, sequestrations, appointments to civil and military offices, in fact the whole administration of the state; and there were times when it was driven to a resolve not to take any private affairs for weeks together in order that it might make some progress with public business. To add to this confusion and muddle there were the inevitable scandals which arose from it; charges of malversation and corruption were hurled at the members of the House; and some, like Haselrig, were accused with justice of using their power to further their own interests. The one remedy for all this was, as the army saw, the assembly of a new and complete Parliament in place of the mere "rump" of the old, but this was the one measure which the House was resolute to avert. Vane spurred it to a new activity. In February 1652, the Amnesty Bill was forced through after

fifteen divisions. A Grand Committee, with Sir Matthew Hale at its head, was appointed to consider the reform of the law. A union with Scotland was pushed resolutely forward; eight English Commissioners convoked a Convention of delegates from its counties and boroughs at Edinburgh, and, in spite of dogged opposition, procured a vote in favour of the proposal. A bill was introduced which gave legal form to the union, and admitted representatives from Scotland into the next Parliament. A similar plan was proposed for a union with Ireland.

War with Holland.

But it was necessary for Vane's purposes not only to show the energy of the Parliament, but to free it from the control of the army. His aim was to raise in the navy a force devoted to the House, and to eclipse the glories of Dunbar and Worcester by yet greater triumphs at sea. With this view the quarrel with Holland had been carefully nursed; a "Navigation Act," prohibiting the importation in foreign vessels of any but the products of the countries to which they belonged, struck a fatal blow at the carrying trade from which the Dutch drew their wealth; and fresh debates arose from the English claim to salutes from all vessels in the Channel. In May, 1652, the two fleets met before Dover, and a summons from Blake to lower the Dutch flag was met by the Dutch admiral, Van Tromp, with a broadside. The States-General attributed the collision to accident, and offered to recall Van Tromp; but the English demands rose at each step in the negotiations till war became inevitable. The army hardly needed the warning conveyed by the introduction of a bill for its disbanding to understand the new policy of the Parliament. It was significant that while accepting the bill for its own dissolution the House had as yet prepared no plan for the assembly which was to follow it; and the Dutch war had hardly been declared when, abandoning the attitude of inaction which it had observed since the beginning of the Commonwealth, the army petitioned, not only for reform in Church and State, but for an explicit declaration

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that the House would bring its proceedings to a clo
The Petition forced the House to discuss a bill for '
New Representative," but the discussion soon brought o
the resolve of the sitting members to continue as a pa
of the coming Parliament without re-election. Tl
officers, irritated by such a claim, demanded in conferen
after conference an immediate dissolution, and the Hou
as resolutely refused. In ominous words Cromwell su
ported the demand of the army. "As for the members
this Parliament, the army begins to take them in disgus
I would it did so with less reason." There was ju
ground, he urged, for discontent in their selfish greed
houses and lands, the scandalous lives of many, the
partiality as judges, their interference with the ordina
course of law in matters of private interest, their delay
law reform, above all in their manifest design of perpetua
ing their own power. "There is little to hope for from suc
men," he ended with a return to his predominant though
"for a settlement of the nation."

Blake.

For the moment the crisis was averted by the events
the war. A terrible storm had separated the two fleet
when on the point of engaging in the Orkneys, but Ruyte
and Blake met again in the Channel, and after a fierc
struggle the Dutch were forced to retire under cover
night. Since the downfall of Spain Holland had been th
first naval power in the world, and the spirit of the natio
rose gallantly with its earliest defeat. Immense effort
were made to strengthen the fleet; and the veteran, Va
Tromp, who was replaced at its head, appeared in th
Channel with seventy-three ships of war. Blake had bu
half the number, but he at once accepted the challenge
and throughout the twenty-eighth of November the unequa
fight went on doggedly till nightfall, when the Englisl
fleet withdrew shattered into the Thames. Tromp swep
the Channel in triumph, with a broom at his masthead
and the tone of the Commons lowered with the defeat o
their favourite force. A compromise seems to have beer

arranged between the two parties, for the bill providing a new Representative was again pushed on; and the Parliament agreed to retire in the coming November, while Cromwell offered no opposition to a reduction of the army. But the courage of the House rose afresh with a turn of fortune. The strenuous efforts of Blake enabled him again to put to sea in a few months after his defeat; and in February, 1653, a running fight through four days ended at last in an English victory, though Tromp's fine seamanship enabled him to save the convoy he was guarding. The House at once insisted on the retention of its power. Not only were the existing members to continue as members of the new Parliament, thus depriving the places they represented of their right of choosing representatives, but they were to constitute a Committee of Revision, and in this capacity to determine the validity of each election and the fitness of the members returned.

The Parliament driven out.

A conference took place between the leaders of the Commons and the Officers of the army, who resolutely demanded not only the omission of these clauses, but that the Parliament should at once dissolve itself, and commit the new elections to a Council of State. "Our charge," retorted Haselrig, "cannot be transferred to any one." The conference was adjourned till the next morning, on an understanding that no decisive step should be taken; but it had no sooner re-assembled on the twentieth of April than the absence of the leading members confirmed the news that Vane was fast pressing the bill for a new Representative through the House. "It is contrary to common honesty," Cromwell angrily broke out; and, quitting Whitehall, he summoned a company of musketeers to follow him as far as the door of the Commons. He sate down quietly in his place, "clad in plain grey clothes and grey worsted stockings," and listened to Vane's passionate arguments. "I am come to do what grieves me to the heart," he said to his neighbour, St. John; but he still remained quiet, till Vane pressed the House to

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waive its usual forms and pass the bill at once. "The time has come," he said to Harrison. "Think well," replied Harrison, "it is a dangerous work!" and Cromwell listened for another quarter of an hour. At the question "that this bill do pass," he at length rose, and his tone grew higher as he repeated his former charges of injustice, self-interest, and delay. "Your hour is come," he ended, "the Lord hath done with you!" A crowd of members started to their feet in angry protest. "Come, come," replied Cromwell, "we have had enough of this;" and striding into the midst of the chamber, he clapt his hat on his head, and exclaimed, "I will put an end to your prating!" In the din that followed his voice was heard in broken sentences—"it is not fit that you should sit here any longer! You should give place to better men! You are no Parliament." Thirty musketeers entered at a sign from their General, and the fifty members present crowded to the door. "Drunkard!" Cromwell broke out as Wentworth passed him; and Martin was taunted with a yet coarser name. Vane, fearless to the last, told him his act was "against all right and all honour." "Ah, Sir Harry Vane, Sir Harry Vane," Cromwell retorted in bitter indignation at the trick he had been played, "you might have prevented all this, but you are a juggler, and have no common honesty! The Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane!" The Speaker refused to quit his seat, till Harrison offered to "lend him a hand to come down." Cromwell lifted the mace from the table. "What shall we do with this bauble?" he said. "Take it away!" The door of the House was locked at last, and the dispersion of the Commons was followed a few hours after by that of their executive committee, the Council of State. Cromwell himself summoned them to withdraw. "We have heard," replied the President, John Bradshaw, "what you have done this morning at the House, and in some hours all England will hear it. But you mistake, sir, if you think the Parliament dissolved. No power on earth can dissolve the Parliament but itself, be sure of that!"

CHAPTER XII.

THE PROTECTORATE.

1653—1660.

The Sword unveiled.

THE thin screen which the continuance of a little knot of representatives had thrown over the rule of the sword was at last torn away. So long as an assembly which called itself a House of Commons met at Westminster, men might still cling to a belief in the existence of a legal government. But now that even this was gone such a belief was no longer possible. The army itself had to recognize its own position. The dispersion of the Parliament and of the Council of State left England without a government, for the authority of every official ended with that of the body from which his power was derived; and Cromwell, as Captain-General, was forced to recognize his responsibility for the maintenance of public order. The one power left in England was the power of the sword. But, as in the revolution of 1648, so in the revolution of 1653, no thought of military despotism can be fairly traced in the acts of the general or the army. They were in fact far from regarding their position as a revolutionary one. Though incapable of justification on any formal ground, their proceedings since the establishment of the Commonwealth had as yet been substantially in vindication of the rights of the country to representation and self-government; and public opinion had gone fairly with the army in its demand for a full and efficient body of representatives, as well as in its resistance to the project by which the Rump would have deprived half England of its

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right of election. It was only when no other means existed of preventing such a wrong that the soldiers had driven out the wrongdoers. "It is you that have forced me to this," Cromwell exclaimed, as he drove the members from the House; "I have sought the Lord night and day that He would rather slay me than put me upon the doing of this work." If the act was one of violence to the little group who claimed to be a House of Commons, the act which it aimed at preventing was one of violence on their part to the constitutional rights of the whole nation. The people had in fact been "dissatisfied in every corner of the realm" at the state of public affairs: and the expulsion of the members was ratified by a general assent. "We did not hear a dog bark at their going," the Protector said years afterwards. Whatever anxiety may have been felt at the use which was like to be made of "the power of the sword," was in great part dispelled by a proclamation of the officers. They professed that their one anxiety was "not to grasp the power ourselves nor to keep it in military hands, no not for a day," and their promise to "call to the government men of approved fidelity and honesty" was to some extent redeemed by the nomination of a provisional Council of State, consisting of eight officers of high rank and four civilians, with Cromwell as their head, and a seat in which was offered, though fruitlessly, to Vane.

The Convention.

The first business of such a body was clearly to summon a new Parliament and to resign its trust into its hands. But the bill for Parliamentary reform had dropped with the expulsion of the Rump; and reluctant as the Council was to summon a new Parliament on the old basis of election, it shrank from the responsibility of effecting so fundamental a change as the creation of a new basis by its own authority. It was this difficulty which led to the expedient of a Constituent Convention. Cromwell told the story of this unlucky assembly some years after with an amusing frankness. "I will come and tell you a story of my own

weakness and folly. And yet it was done in my simplicity —I dare avow it was. . . . It was thought then that men of our own judgement, who had fought in the wars, and were all of a piece on that account—why, surely, these men will hit it, and these men will do it to the purpose, whatever can be desired! And surely we did think, and I did think so—the more blame to me!" Of the hundred and fifty-six men, "faithful, fearing God, and hating covetousness," whose names were selected for this purpose by the Council of State from lists furnished by the congregational churches, the bulk were men, like Ashley Cooper, of good blood and "free estates;" and the proportion of burgesses, such as the leather-merchant, Praise-God Barebones, whose name was eagerly seized on as a nickname for the body to which he belonged, seems to have been much the same as in earlier Parliaments. But the circumstances of their choice told fatally on the temper of its members. Cromwell himself, in the burst of rugged eloquence with which he welcomed their assembling on the fourth of July, was carried away by a strange enthusiasm. "Convince the nation," he said, "that as men fearing God have fought them out of their bondage under the regal power, so men fearing God do now rule them in the fear of God. . . . Own your call, for it is of God: indeed it is marvellous, and it hath been unprojected. . . . Never was a supreme power under such a way of owning God and being owned by Him." A spirit yet more enthusiastic appeared in the proceedings of the Convention itself.

Its work.

The resignation of their powers by Cromwell and the Council into its hands left it the one supreme authority; but by the instrument which convoked it provision had been made that this authority should be transferred in fifteen months to another assembly elected according to its directions. Its work was, in fact, to be that of a constituent assembly, paving the way for a Parliament on a really national basis. But the Convention put the largest construction on its commission, and boldly undertook the

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whole task of constitutional reform. Committees were appointed to consider the needs of the Church and the nation. The spirit of economy and honesty which pervaded the assembly appeared in its redress of the extravagance which prevailed in the civil service, and of the inequality of taxation. With a remarkable energy it undertook a host of reforms, for whose execution England has had to wait to our own day. The Long Parliament had shrunk from any reform of the Court of Chancery, where twenty-three thousand cases were waiting unheard. The Convention proposed its abolition. The work of compiling a single code of laws, begun under the Long Parliament by a committee with Sir Matthew Hale at its head, was again pushed forward. The frenzied alarm which these bold measures aroused among the lawyer class was soon backed by that of the clergy, who saw their wealth menaced by the establishment of civil marriage and by proposals to substitute the free contributions of congregations for the payment of tithes. The landed proprietors too rose against a scheme for the abolition of lay-patronage, which was favoured by the Convention, and predicted an age of confiscation. The "Barebones Parliament," as the assembly was styled in derision, was charged with a design to ruin property, the Church, and the law, with enmity to knowledge, and a blind and ignorant fanaticism.

Close of the Convention.

Cromwell himself shared the general uneasiness at its proceedings. His mind was that of an administrator rather than that of a statesman, unspeculative, deficient in foresight, conservative, and eminently practical. He saw the need of administrative reform in Church and State; but he had no sympathy whatever with the revolutionary theories which were filling the air around him. His desire was for "a settlement" which should be accompanied with as little disturbance of the old state of things as possible. If Monarchy had vanished in the turmoil of war, his experience of the Long Parliament

only confirmed him in his belief of the need of establishing an executive power of a similar kind, apart from the power of the legislature, as a condition of civil liberty. His sword had won "liberty of conscience;" but passionately as he clung to it, he was still for an established Church, for a parochial system, and a ministry maintained by tithes. His social tendencies were simply those of the class to which he belonged. "I was by birth a gentleman," he told a later Parliament, and in the old social arrangement of "a nobleman, a gentleman, a yeoman," he saw "a good interest of the nation and a great one." He hated "that levelling principle" which tended to the reducing of all to one equality. "What was the purport of it," he asks with an amusing simplicity, "but to make the tenant as liberal a fortune as the landlord? Which, I think, if obtained, would not have lasted long. The men of that principle, after they had served their own turns, would then have cried up property and interest fast enough." To a practical temper such as this the speculative reforms of the Convention were as distasteful as to the lawyers and clergy whom they attacked. "Nothing," said Cromwell, "was in the hearts of these men but 'overturn, overturn.'" In December however he was delivered from his embarrassment by the internal dissensions of the Assembly itself. The day after the decision against tithes the more conservative members snatched a vote by surprise "that the sitting of this Parliament any longer, as now constituted, will not be for the good of the Commonwealth, and that it is requisite to deliver up unto the Lord-General the powers we received from him." The Speaker placed their abdication in Cromwell's hands, and the act was confirmed by the subsequent adhesion of a majority of the members.

The Instrument of Government

The dissolution of the Convention replaced matters in the state in which its assembly had found them; but there was still the same general anxiety to substitute some sort of legal rule for the power of the sword. The Convention had named during its session a fresh Council of State, and

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this body at once drew up, under the name of the Instrument of Government, a remarkable Constitution which was adopted by the Council of Officers. They were now driven by necessity to the step from which they had shrunk, that of convening a Parliament on the reformed basis of representation, though such a basis had no legal sanction. The House was to consist of four hundred members from England, thirty from Scotland, and thirty from Ireland. The seats hitherto assigned to small and rotten boroughs were transferred to larger constituencies, and for the most part to counties. All special rights of voting in the election of members were abolished, and replaced by a general right of suffrage, based on the possession of real or personal property to the value of two hundred pounds. Catholics and "Malignants," as those who had fought for the King were called, were excluded for the while from the franchise. Constitutionally all further organization of the form of government should have been left to this Assembly; but the dread of disorder during the interval of its election, as well as a longing for "settlement," drove the Council to complete their work by pressing the office of "Protector" upon Cromwell. "They told me," he pleaded afterwards, "that except I would undertake the government they thought things would hardly come to a composure or settlement, but blood and confusion would break in as before." If we follow however his own statement, it was when they urged that the acceptance of such a Protectorate actually limited his power as Lord-General, and "bound his hands to act nothing without the consent of a Council until the Parliament," that the post was accepted. The powers of the new Protector indeed were strictly limited. Though the members of the Council were originally named by him, each member was irremovable save by consent of the rest: their advice was necessary in all foreign affairs, their consent in matters of peace and war, their approval in nominations to the great offices of state, or the disposal

of the military or civil power. With this body too lay the choice of all future Protectors. To the administrative check of the Council was added the political check of the Parliament. Three years at the most were to elapse between the assembling of one Parliament and another, and, once met, it could not be prorogued or dissolved for five months. Laws could not be made, nor taxes imposed but by its authority, and after the lapse of twenty days the statutes it passed became laws, even though the Protector's assent was refused to them. The new Constitution was undoubtedly popular; and the promise of a real Parliament in a few months covered the want of any legal character in the new rule. The Government was generally accepted as a provisional one, which could only acquire legal authority from the ratification of its acts in the coming session; and the desire to settle it on such a Parliamentary basis was universal among the members of the new Assembly which met in September 1654 at Westminster.

The Parliament of 1654.

Few Parliaments have ever been more memorable, or more truly representative of the English people, than the Parliament of 1654. It was the first Parliament in our history where members from Scotland and Ireland sate side by side with those from England, as they sit in the Parliament of to-day. The members for rotten boroughs and pocket-boroughs had disappeared. In spite of the exclusion of royalists and Catholics from the polling-booths, and the arbitrary erasure of the names of a few ultra-republican members by the Council, the House had a better title to the name of a "free Parliament" than any which had sat before. The freedom with which the electors had exercized their right of voting was seen indeed in the large number of Presbyterian members who were returned, and in the reappearance of Haselrig and Bradshaw, with many members of the Long Parliament, side by side with Lord Herbert and the older Sir Harry Vane. The first business of the House was clearly to consider the question of government; and Haselrig, with the fiercer republicans, at once denied

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the legal existence of either Council or Protector, on the ground that the Long Parliament had never been dissolved. Such an argument however told as much against the Parliament in which they sate as against the administration itself, and the bulk of the Assembly contented themselves with declining to recognize the Constitution or Protectorate as of more than provisional validity. They proceeded at once to settle the government on a Parliamentary basis. The "Instrument" was taken as the groundwork of the new Constitution, and carried clause by clause. That Cromwell should retain his rule as Protector was unanimously agreed; that he should possess the right of veto or a co-ordinate legislative power with the Parliament was hotly debated, though the violent language of Haselrig did little to disturb the general tone of moderation. Suddenly however Cromwell interposed. If he had undertaken the duties of Protector with reluctance, he looked on all legal defects in his title as more than supplied by the general acceptance of the nation. "I called not myself to this place," he urged, "God and the people of these kingdoms have borne testimony to it." His rule had been accepted by London, by the army, by the solemn decision of the judges, by addresses from every shire, by the very appearance of the members of the Parliament in answer to his writ. "Why may I not balance this Providence," he asked, "with any hereditary interest?" In this national approval he saw a call from God, a Divine Right of a higher order than that of the kings who had gone before.

Cromwell's administration.

But there was another ground for the anxiety with which Cromwell watched the proceedings of the Commons. His passion for administration had far overstepped the bounds of a merely provisional rule in the interval before the assembling of the Parliament. His desire for "settlement" had been strengthened not only by the drift of public opinion, but by the urgent need of every day; and the power reserved by the "Instrument" to issue temporary Ordinances. "until further order in such matters, to be taken by the

Parliament," gave a scope to his marvellous activity of which he at once took advantage. Sixty-four Ordinances had been issued in the nine months before the meeting of the Parliament. Peace had been concluded with Holland. The Church had been set in order. The law itself had been minutely regulated. The union with Scotland had been brought to completion. So far was Cromwell from dreaming that these measures, or the authority which enacted them, would be questioned, that he looked to Parliament simply to complete his work. "The great end of your meeting," he said at the first assembly of its members, "is healing and settling." Though he had himself done much, he added, "there was still much to be done." Peace had to be made with Portugal, and alliance with Spain. Bills were laid before the House for the codification of the law. The plantation and settlement of Ireland had still to be completed. He resented the setting these projects aside for constitutional questions which, as he held, a Divine call had decided, and he resented yet more the renewed claim advanced by Parliament to the sole power of legislation. As we have seen, his experience of the evils which had arisen from the concentration of legislative and executive power in the Long Parliament had convinced Cromwell of the danger to public liberty which lay in such a union. He saw in the joint government of "a single person and a Parliament" the only assurance "that Parliaments should not make themselves perpetual," or that their power should not be perverted to public wrong.

Dissolution of the Parliament.

But whatever strength there may have been in the Protector's arguments, the act by which he proceeded to enforce them was fatal to liberty, and in the end to Puritanism. "If my calling be from God," he ended, "and my testimony from the People, God and the People shall take it from me, else I will not part from it." And he announced that no member would be suffered to enter the House without signing an engagement "not to alter the

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Government as it is settled in a single person and a Parliament." No act of the Stuarts had been a bolder defiance of constitutional law; and the act was as needless as it was illegal. One hundred members alone refused to take the engagement, and the signatures of three-fourths of the House proved that the security Cromwell desired might have been easily procured by a vote of Parliament. But those who remained resumed their constitutional task with unbroken firmness. They quietly asserted their sole title to government by referring the Protector's Ordinances to Committees for revision, and for conversion into laws. The "Instrument of Government" was turned into a bill, debated, and after some serious modifications read a third time. Money votes, as in previous Parliaments, were deferred till "grievances" had been settled. But Cromwell once more intervened. The royalists were astir again; and he attributed their renewed hopes to the hostile attitude which he ascribed to the Parliament. The army, which remained unpaid while the supplies were delayed, was seething with discontent. "It looks," said the Protector, "as if the laying grounds for a quarrel had rather been designed than to give the people settlement. Judge yourselves whether the contesting of things that were provided for by this government hath been profitable expense of time for the good of this nation." In January, 1655, with words of angry reproach he declared the Parliament dissolved.

The Major-Generals.

The dissolution of the Parliament of 1654 was a turning point in the relations of England and the army. As yet neither the people nor the soldiers had fairly recognized the actual state of affairs. From the revolution of 1648 the sword had been supreme, but its supremacy had been disguised by the continuance of the Rump. When the Rump was expelled, the military rule which followed still seemed only provisional. The bulk of Englishmen and the bulk of the army itself looked on its attitude as simply imposed on it by necessity, and believed that with the assembly of a

Parliament all would return to a legal course. But the Parliament had come and gone; and the army still refused to lay down the sword. On the contrary, it seemed at last to resolve to grasp frankly the power which it had so long shrunk from openly wielding. All show of constitutional rule was now at an end. The Protectorate, deprived by its own act of all chance of legal sanction, became a simple tyranny. Cromwell professed indeed to be restrained by the "Instrument:" but the one great restraint on his power which the Instrument provided, the inability to levy taxes save by consent of Parliament, was set aside on the plea of necessity. "The People," said the Protector in words which Strafford might have uttered, "will prefer their real security to forms." That a danger of royalist revolt existed was undeniable, but the danger was at once doubled by the general discontent. From this moment, Whitelock tells us, "many sober and noble patriots," in despair of public liberty, "did begin to incline to the King's restoration." In the mass of the population the reaction was far more rapid. "Charles Stuart," writes a Cheshire correspondent to the Secretary of State, "hath five hundred friends in these adjacent counties for every one friend to you among them." But before the overpowering strength of the army even this general discontent was powerless. Yorkshire, where the royalist insurrection was expected to be most formidable, never ventured to rise at all. There were risings in Devon, Dorset, and the Welsh Marches, but they were quickly put down, and their leaders brought to the scaffold. Easily however as the revolt was suppressed, the terror of the Government was seen in the energetic measures to which Cromwell resorted in the hope of securing order. The country was divided into ten military governments, each with a major-general at its head, who was empowered to disarm all papists and royalists, and to arrest suspected persons. Funds for the support of this military despotism were provided by an Ordinance of the Council of State, which

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enacted that all who had at any time borne arms for the King should pay every year a tenth part of their income, in spite of the Act of Oblivion, as a fine for their royalist tendencies. The despotism of the major-generals was seconded by the older expedients of tyranny. The ejected clergy had been zealous in promoting the insurrection, and they were forbidden in revenge to act as chaplains or as tutors. The press was placed under a strict censorship. The payment of taxes levied by the sole authority of the Protector was enforced by distraint; and when a collector was sued in the courts for redress, the counsel for the prosecution were sent to the Tower.

Settlement of Scotland.

If pardon indeed could ever be won for a tyranny, the wisdom and grandeur with which he used the power he had usurped would win pardon for the Protector. The greatest among the many great enterprises undertaken by the Long Parliament had been the union of the three Kingdoms: and that of Scotland with England had been brought about, at the very end of its career, by the tact and vigour of Sir Harry Vane. But its practical realization was left to Cromwell. In four months of hard fighting General Monk brought the Highlands to a new tranquillity; and the presence of an army of eight thousand men, backed by a line of forts, kept the most restless of the clans in good order. The settlement of the country was brought about by the temperance and sagacity of Monk's successor, General Deane. No further interference with the Presbyterian system was attempted beyond the suppression of the General Assembly. But religious liberty was resolutely protected, and Deane ventured even to interfere on behalf of the miserable victims whom Scotch bigotry was torturing and burning on the charge of witchcraft. Even steady royalists acknowledged the justice of the Government and the wonderful discipline of its troops. "We always reckon those eight years of the usurpation," said Burnet afterwards, "a time of great peace and prosperity."

Settlement of Ireland.

Sterner work had to be done before Ireland could be brought into real union with its sister kingdoms. The work of conquest had been continued by Ireton, and completed after his death by General Ludlow, as mercilessly as it had begun. Thousands perished by famine or the sword. Shipload after shipload of those who surrendered were sent over sea for sale into forced labour in Jamaica and the West Indies. More than forty thousand of the beaten Catholics were permitted to enlist for foreign service, and found a refuge in exile under the banners of France and Spain. The work of settlement, which was undertaken by Henry Cromwell, the younger and abler of the Protector's sons, turned out to be even more terrible than the work of the sword. It took as its model the Colonization of Ulster, the fatal measure which had destroyed all hope of a united Ireland, and had brought inevitably in its train the revolt and the war. The people were divided into classes in the order of their assumed guilt. All who after fair trial were proved to have personally taken part in the massacre were sentenced to banishment or death. The general amnesty which freed "those of the meaner sort" from all question on other scores was far from extending to the landowners. Catholic proprietors who had shown no goodwill to the Parliament, even though they had taken no part in the war, were punished by the forfeiture of a third of their estates. All who had borne arms were held to have forfeited the whole, and driven into Connaught, where fresh estates were carved out for them from the lands of the native clans. No such doom had ever fallen on a nation in modern times as fell upon Ireland in its new settlement. Among the bitter memories which part Ireland from England the memory of the bloodshed and confiscation which the Puritans wrought remains the bitterest; and the worst curse an Irish peasant can hurl at his enemy is "the curse of Cromwell." But pitiless as the Protector's policy was, it was successful in the ends at which it aimed. The whole native population lay

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helpless and crushed. Peace and order were restored, and a large incoming of Protestant settlers from England and Scotland brought a new prosperity to the wasted country. Above all, the legislative union which had been brought about with Scotland was now carried out with Ireland, and thirty seats were allotted to its representatives in the general Parliament.

Settlement of England.

In England Cromwell dealt with the royalists as irreconcilable enemies; but in every other respect he carried fairly out his pledge of "healing and settling." The series of administrative reforms planned by the Convention had been partially carried into effect before the meeting of Parliament in 1654; but the work was pushed on after the dissolution of the House with yet greater energy. Nearly a hundred ordinances showed the industry of the Government. Police, public amusements, roads, finances, the condition of prisons, the imprisonment of debtors, were a few among the subjects which claimed Cromwell's attention. An ordinance of more than fifty clauses reformed the Court of Chancery. The anarchy which had reigned in the Church since the breakdown of Episcopacy and the failure of the Presbyterian system to supply its place, was put an end to by a series of wise and temperate measures for its reorganization. Rights of patronage were left untouched; but a Board of Triers, a fourth of whom were laymen, was appointed to examine the fitness of ministers presented to livings; and a Church board of gentry and clergy was set up in every county to exercize a supervision over ecclesiastical affairs, and to detect and remove scandalous and ineffectual ministers. Even by the confession of Cromwell's opponents the plan worked well. It furnished the country with "able, serious preachers," Baxter tells us, "who lived a godly life, of what tolerable opinion soever they were;" and, as both Presbyterian and Congregationalist ministers were presented to livings at the will of their patrons, it solved so far as practical working was concerned the problem of a religious union among

Protestants on the base of a wide variety of Christian opinion. From the Church which was thus reorganized all power of interference with faiths differing from its own was resolutely withheld. Save in his dealings with the Episcopalians, whom he looked on as a political danger, Cromwell remained true throughout to the cause of religious liberty. Even the Quaker, rejected by all other Christian bodies as an anarchist and blasphemer, found sympathy and protection in the Protector. The Jews had been excluded from England since the reign of Edward the First; and a prayer which they now presented for leave to return was refused by a commission of merchants and divines to whom the Protector referred it for consideration. But the refusal was quietly passed over, and the connivance of Cromwell in the settlement of a few Hebrews in London and Oxford was so clearly understood that no one ventured to interfere with them.

Cromwell's foreign policy.

No part of his policy is more characteristic of Cromwell's mind, whether in its strength or in its weakness, than his management of foreign affairs. While England had been absorbed in her long and obstinate struggle for freedom the whole face of the world around her had changed. The Thirty Years' War was over. The victories of Gustavus, and of the Swedish generals who followed him, had been seconded by the policy of Richelieu and the intervention of France. Protestantism in Germany was no longer in peril from the bigotry or ambition of the House of Austria; and the Treaty of Westphalia had drawn a permanent line between the territories belonging to the adherents of the old religion and the new. There was little danger indeed now to Europe from the great Catholic House which had threatened its freedom ever since Charles the Fifth. Its Austrian branch was called away from dreams of aggression in the west to a desperate struggle with the Turk for the possession of Hungary and the security of Austria itself. Spain, from causes which it is no part of our present story to detail, was falling into a state of strange decrepi-

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tude. So far from aiming to be mistress of Europe, she was rapidly sinking into the almost helpless prey of France. It was France which had now become the dominant power in Christendom, though her position was far from being as commanding as it was to become under Lewis the Fourteenth. The peace and order which prevailed after the cessation of the religious troubles throughout her compact and fertile territory gave scope at last to the quick and industrious temper of the French people; while her wealth and energy was placed by the centralizing administration of Henry the Fourth, of Richelieu, and of Mazarin, almost absolutely in the hands of the Crown. Under the three great rulers who have just been named her ambition was steadily directed to the same purpose of territorial aggrandizement, and though limited as yet to the annexation of the Spanish and Imperial territories which still parted her frontier from the Pyrenees, the Alps, and the Rhine, a statesman of wise political genius would have discerned the beginning of that great struggle for supremacy over Europe at large which was only foiled by the genius of Marlborough and the victories of the Grand Alliance.

Cromwell and Spain.

But in his view of European politics Cromwell was misled by the conservative and unspeculative temper of his mind as well as by the strength of his religious enthusiasm. Of the change in the world around him he seems to have discerned nothing. He brought to the Europe of Mazarin the hopes and ideas with which all England was thrilling in his youth at the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War. Spain was still to him "the head of the Papal Interest," whether at home or abroad. "The Papists in England" he said to the Parliament of 1656, "have been accounted, ever since I was born, Spaniolized; they never regarded France, or any other Papist state, but Spain only." The old English hatred of Spain, the old English resentment at the shameful part which the nation had been forced to play in the great German struggle by the policy of James and of Charles, lived on in Cromwell, and was only strengthened

by the religious enthusiasm which the success of Puritanism had kindled within him. "The Lord Himself," he wrote to his admirals as they sailed to the West Indies, "hath a controversy with your enemies; even with that Romish Babylon of which the Spaniard is the great underpropper. In that respect we fight the Lord's battles." What Sweden had been under Gustavus, England, Cromwell dreamed, might be now—the head of a great Protestant League in the struggle against Catholic aggression. "You have on your shoulders," he said to the Parliament of 1654, "the interest of all the Christian people of the world. I wish it may be written on our hearts to be zealous for that interest." The first step in such a struggle would necessarily be to league the Protestant powers together, and Cromwell's earliest efforts were directed to bring the ruinous and indecisive quarrel with Holland to an end. The fierceness of the strife had grown with each engagement; but the hopes of Holland fell with her admiral, Tromp, who received a mortal wound at a moment when he had succeeded in forcing the English line; and the skill and energy of his successor, De Ruyter, struggled in vain to restore her waning fortunes. She was saved by the expulsion of the Long Parliament, which had persisted in its demand for a political union of the two countries; and the new policy of Cromwell was seen in the conclusion of peace. The peace indeed was dearly bought. Not only did the United Provinces recognize the supremacy of the English flag in the British seas, and submit to the Navigation Act, but that of Holland pledged itself to shut out the House of Orange from power, and thus relieved England from the risk of seeing a Stuart restoration supported by Dutch forces.

War with Spain.

The peace which was concluded with the Dutch in 1654 was followed by the conclusion of like treaties with Sweden and with Denmark; and on the arrival of a Swedish envoy with offers of a league of friendship Cromwell endeavoured to bring the Dutch, the Brandenburgers, and the Danes into

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a confederation of the Protestant powers. His efforts in this direction however, though they never wholly ceased, remained fruitless; but the Protector was resolute to carry out his plans single-handed. The defeat of the Dutch had left England the chief sea-power of the world; and in the first days of 1655, before the dissolution of the Parliament, two fleets put to sea with secret instructions. The first, under Blake, appeared in the Mediterranean, exacted reparation from Tuscany for wrongs done to English commerce, bombarded Algiers, and destroyed the fleet with which its pirates had ventured through the reign of Charles to insult the English coast. The thunder of Blake's guns, every Puritan believed, would be heard in the castle of St. Angelo, and Rome itself would have to bow to the greatness of Cromwell. But though no declaration of war had been issued against Spain, the true aim of both expeditions was an attack on that power; and the attack proved singularly unsuccessful. Though Blake sailed to the Spanish coast, he failed to intercept the treasure fleet from America; and the second expedition, which made its way to the West Indies, was foiled in a descent on St. Domingo. It conquered Jamaica in May; but the conquest of this lesser island, important as it really was in breaking through the monopoly of the New World in the South which Spain had till now enjoyed, seemed at the time but a poor result for the vast expenditure of money and blood. The leaders of the expedition, Blake and Venables, were committed to the Tower on their return in September; but Cromwell found himself at war with Spain, and thrown whether he would or no into the hands of Mazarin.

Parliament of 1655.

In October, 1655, he was forced to sign a treaty of alliance with France; while the cost of his abortive expeditions drove him again to face a Parliament. But Cromwell no longer trusted, as in his earlier Parliament, to freedom of election. The sixty members who were returned under the Ordinances of union by Scotland and

Ireland were simply nominees of the Government. Its whole influence was exerted to secure the return of the more conspicuous members of the Council of State. It was calculated that of the members returned one-half were bound to the Government by ties of profit or place. But Cromwell was still unsatisfied. A certificate of the Council was required from each member before admission to the House when it met in September, 1656; and a fourth of the whole number returned—one hundred in all, with Haselrig at their head—were by this means excluded on grounds of disaffection or want of religion. To these arbitrary acts of violence the House replied only by a course of singular moderation and wisdom. From the first it disclaimed any purpose of opposing the Government. One of its earliest acts provided securities for Cromwell's person, which was threatened by constant plots of assassination. It supported him in his war policy, and voted supplies of unprecedented extent for the maintenance of the struggle. It was this attitude of loyalty which gave force to its steady refusal to sanction the system of tyranny which had practically placed England under martial law. In his opening address Cromwell boldly took his stand in support of the military despotism wielded by the major-generals. "It hath been more effectual towards the discountenancing of vice and settling religion than anything done these fifty years. I will abide by it," he said, with singular vehemence, "notwithstanding the envy and slander of foolish men. I could as soon venture my life with it as with anything I ever undertook. If it were to be done again, I would do it." But no sooner had a bill been introduced into Parliament to confirm the proceedings of the major-generals than a long debate showed the temper of the Commons. They had resolved to acquiesce in the Protectorate, but they were equally resolved to bring it again to a legal mode of government. This indeed was the aim of even Cromwell's wiser adherents. "What makes me fear the passing of this Act,"

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one of them wrote to his son Henry, "is that thereby his Highness' government will be more founded in force, and more removed from that natural foundation which the people in Parliament are desirous to give him, supposing that he will become more theirs than now he is." The bill was rejected, and Cromwell bowed to the feeling of the nation by withdrawing the powers of the major-generals.

Offer of the Crown to Cromwell.

But the defeat of the tyranny of the sword was only a step towards a far bolder effort for the restoration of the power of the law. It was no mere pedantry, still less was it vulgar flattery, which influenced the Parliament in their offer to Cromwell of the title of King. The experience of the last few years had taught the nation the value of the traditional forms under which its liberties had grown up. A king was limited by constitutional precedents. "The king's prerogative," it was well urged, "is under the courts of justice, and is bounded as well as any acre of land, or anything a man hath." A Protector, on the other hand, was new in our history, and there were no traditional means of limiting his power. "The one office being lawful in its nature," said Glynne, "known to the nation, certain in itself, and confined and regulated by the law, and the other not so—that was the great ground why the Parliament did so much insist on this office and title." Under the name of Monarchy, indeed, the question really at issue between the party headed by the officers and the party led by the lawyers in the Commons was that of the restoration of constitutional and legal rule. In March, 1657, the proposal was carried by an overwhelming majority, but a month passed in endless consultations between the Parliament and the Protector. His good sense, his knowledge of the general feeling of the nation, his real desire to obtain a settlement which should secure the ends for which Puritanism fought, political and religious liberty, broke, in conference after conference, through a mist of words. But his real concern throughout was with the temper of the army. Under whatever spurious disguises he cloaked

the true nature of his government from the world, Cromwell knew well that it was a sheer government of the sword, that he was without hold upon the nation, and that the discontent of his soldiery would at once shake the fabric of his power. He vibrated to and fro between his sense of the political advantages of such a settlement, and his sense of its impossibility in face of the mood of the army. His soldiers, he said, were no common swordsmen. They were "godly men, men that will not be beaten down by a worldly and carnal spirit while they keep their integrity;" men in whose general voice he recognized the voice of God. "They are honest and faithful men," he urged, "true to the great things of the Government. And though it really is no part of their goodness to be unwilling to submit to what a Parliament shall settle over them, yet it is my duty and conscience to beg of you that there may be no hard things put upon them which they cannot swallow. I cannot think God would bless an undertaking of anything which would justly and with cause grieve them."

Inauguration of the Protector.

The temper of the army was soon shown. Its leaders, with Lambert, Fleetwood, and Desborough at their head, placed their commands in Cromwell's hands. A petition from the officers to Parliament demanded the withdrawal of the proposal to restore the Monarchy, "in the name of the old cause for which they had bled;" and on the eighth of May Cromwell anticipated the coming debate on this petition, a debate which might have led to an open breach between the army and the Commons, by a refusal of the crown. "I cannot undertake this Government," he said, "with that title of King; and that is my answer to this great and weighty business." Disappointed as it was, the Parliament with singular self-restraint turned to other modes of bringing about its purpose. The offer of the crown had been coupled with the condition of accepting a constitution, which was a modification of the Instrument of Government adopted by the Parliament of 1654,

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and this Constitution Cromwell emphatically approved. "The things provided by this Act of Government," he owned, "do secure the liberties of the people of God as they never before have had them." With a change of the title of King into that of Protector, the Act of Government now became law: and the solemn inauguration of the Protector by the Parliament on the twenty-sixth of June was a practical acknowledgement on the part of Cromwell of the illegality of his former rule. In the name of the Commons the Speaker invested him with a mantle of State, placed the sceptre in his hand, and girt the sword of justice by his side. By the new Act of Government Cromwell was allowed to name his own successor, but in all after cases the office was to be an elective one. In every other respect the forms of the older Constitution were carefully restored. Parliament was again to consist of two Houses, the seventy members of "the other House" being named by the Protector. The Commons regained their old right of exclusively deciding on the qualification of their members. Parliamentary restrictions were imposed on the choice of members of the Council, and officers of State or of the army. A fixed revenue was voted to the Protector, and it was provided that no moneys should be raised but by assent of Parliament. Liberty of worship was secured for all but Papists, Prelatists, Socinians, or those who denied the inspiration of the Scriptures; and liberty of conscience was secured for all.

Cromwell's triumphs.

The adjournment of the House after his inauguration in the summer of 1657, left Cromwell at the height of his power. He seemed at last to have placed his government on a legal and national basis. The ill-success of his earlier operations abroad was forgotten in a blaze of glory. On the eve of the Parliment's assembly one of Blake's captains had managed to intercept a part of the Spanish treasure fleet. At the close of 1656 the Protector seemed to have found the means of realizing his schemes for rekindling

the religious war throughout Europe in a quarrel between the Duke of Savoy and his Protestant subjects in the valleys of Piedmont. A ruthless massacre of these Vaudois by the Duke's troops roused deep resentment throughout England, a resentment which still breathes in the noblest of Milton's sonnets. While the poet called on God to avenge his "slaughtered saints, whose bones lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold," Cromwell was already busy with the work of earthly vengeance. An English envoy appeared at the Duke's court with haughty demands of redress. Their refusal would have been followed by instant war, for the Protestant Cantons of Switzerland were bribed into promising a force of ten thousand men for an attack on Savoy. The plan was foiled by the cool diplomacy of Mazarin, who forced the Duke to grant Cromwell's demands; but the apparent success of the Protector raised his reputation at home and abroad. The spring of 1657 saw the greatest as it was the last of the triumphs of Blake. He found the Spanish Plate fleet guarded by galleons in the strongly-armed harbour of Santa Cruz; and on the twentieth of April he forced an entrance into the harbour and burnt or sank every ship within it. Triumphs at sea were followed by a triumph on land. Cromwell's demand of Dunkirk, which had long stood in the way of any acceptance of his offers of aid, was at last conceded; and in May, 1657, a detachment of the Puritan army joined the French troops who were attacking Flanders under the command of Turenne. Their valour and discipline were shown by the part they took in the capture of Mardyke in the summer of that year; and still more in the June of 1658 by the victory of the Dunes, a victory which forced the Flemish towns to open their gates to the French, and gave Dunkirk to Cromwell.

Cromwell's theory.

Never had the fame of an English ruler stood higher; but in the midst of his glory the hand of death was falling on the Protector. He had long been weary of his task. "God knows," he had burst out to the Parliament

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a year before, "God knows I would have been glad to have lived under my woodside, and to have kept a flock of sheep, rather than to have undertaken this government." Amidst the glory of his aims, Cromwell's heart was heavy with this sense of failure. Whatever dreams of personal ambition had mingled with his aim, his aim had in the main been a high and unselfish one; in the course that seems to modern eyes so strange and complex he had seen the leading of a divine hand that drew him from the sheepfolds to mould England into a people of God. What convinced him that the nation was called by a divine calling was the wonder which men felt at every step in its advance. The England which he saw around him was not an England which Pym or Hampden had foreseen, which Vane in his wildest dreams had imagined, or for which the boldest among the soldiers of the New Model had fought. Step by step the nation had been drawn to changes from whence it shrank, to principles which it held in horror. When the struggle began the temper of the men who waged it was a strictly conservative temper; they held themselves to be withstanding the revolutionary changes of the King, to be vindicating the existing constitution both of Church and State. But the strife had hardly opened when they were drawn by very need to a revolutionary platform. What men found themselves fighting for at Edgehill and Marston Moor was the substitution of government by the will of the nation for government by the will of the King, and a setting aside of the religious compromise embodied in the Church of the Tudors for a Church which was the mere embodiment of the Puritan section of the people at large. Defeat drove England to the New Model; and again it found itself drawn to a new advance. No sooner was the sword in the hand of the "Godly," than the conception of religious purity widened into that of religious liberty, and the thought of a nation self-governed into the dream of a kingdom of God. Dunbar and Worcester, the strife with the Houses, the final

strife with the King, turned the dream into a practical policy. Every obstacle fell before it. Episcopal Church and Presbyterian Church alike passed away. The loyalty of the nation, the stubborn efforts of Cromwell and Ireton, failed to uphold the Monarchy. Lords and Commons fell in the very moment of their victory over the King. Desperately as men clung to the last shadow of a Parliament, the victories of Blake, the statesmanship of Vane, failed to preserve the life of the Rump. In the crash of every political and religious institution the army found itself the one power in the land, and the dream of its soldiers grew into a will to set up on earth a Commonwealth of the Saints.

The Puritan State.

In this resolve Cromwell was at one with the New Model. Like every soldier in his army, he held that by the victories God had given them He had "so called them to look after the government of the land, and so entrusted them with the welfare of all His people, that they were responsible for it, and might not in conscience stand still while anything was done which they thought was against the interest of the people of God." But he never doubted that the nation would own its calling as zealously as his soldiers did. He had no wish to change the outer form of its political or its social life; he would maintain social distinctions as he would maintain Parliaments. But the old institutions must be penetrated with a new spirit. Conscience and worship must be free. Holiness must be the law of England's life. Its rulers must be found among "godly men," and their rule must be widened beyond the common sphere of temporal government. The old distinctions of the secular and the spiritual world must be done away. In public and in private life the new government must enforce obedience to the will of God. Socially such a theory seemed realized at last in the administration of the major-generals. Never had Cromwell been so satisfied. The "malignants" who had so long trodden pious men under foot lay helpless at the feet of the godly. The "Cavalier interest," which was but

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"the badge and character of countenancing profaneness, disorder, and wickedness in all places," was crushed and powerless. "Christian men" reigned supreme. Cromwell recalled how "it was a shame to be a Christian within these fifteen, sixteen, or seventeen years in this nation. It was a shame, it was a reproach to a man; and the badge of Puritan was put upon it!" But the shame and reproach were now rolled away. The Puritan was master in the land. All government was in the hands of godly men. Piety was as needful for an officer in the army, for a magistrate, for a petty constable, as for a minister of religion. The aim of the Protector was that England should be ruled and administered by "the best," by men ruling and administering in the fear of God. In Church as in State all that such men had longed to do could now be done. Superstitious usages were driven from the churches. No minister wore a surplice. No child was signed in baptism with a cross. The very pastimes of the world had to conform themselves to the law of God. The theatres were closed. Sunday sports were summarily abolished. There were no more races, no more bull-baitings, no more cock-fighting, no more dances under the May-pole. Christmas had to pass without its junketings, or mummers, or mince-pies.

Its failure.

To the eyes of mere zealots the work of Puritanism seemed done. But Cromwell was no mere zealot. Strangely mingled with the enthusiasm of his temper was a cool, passionless faculty of seeing things as they actually were about him; and he saw that in its very hour of triumph the cause he loved was losing ground. From this effort to turn England into a kingdom of God, England itself stood aloof. Its traditional instincts were outraged by the wreck of its institutions, its good sense by the effort to enforce godliness by civil penalties, its self-respect by the rule of the sword. Never had England shown a truer nobleness than when it refused to be tempted from the path of freedom even by the genius of Cromwell, never a truer wisdom than when it refused to be lured from its tradition of prac-

tical politics by the dazzling seductions of the Puritan ideal. And not only did the nation stand aloof from Cromwell's work, but its opposition grew hourly stronger. The very forces which seemed to have been annihilated by the Civil War drew a fresh life from the national ill-will to their conquerors. Men forgot the despotism of the Monarchy when the Monarchy and the Parliament lay wrecked in a common ruin. They forgot the tyranny of Laud when the Church was trampled under foot by men who trampled under foot the constitution. By a strange turn of fortune the restoration of the Church and of the Crown became identified with the restoration of legal government and with the overthrow of a rule of brute force. And for such a restoration the vast majority of the nation were longing more and more. The old enmities of party and sect were forgotten in the common enmity of every party and every sect to the tyranny of the sword. A new national unity was revealing itself, as one jarring element after another came in to swell the mass of the national opposition to the system of the Protectorate. The moderate royalist joined hands with the Cavalier, the steady Presbyterian came to join the moderate royalist, and their ranks were swelled at last by the very founders of the Commonwealth. Nothing marked more vividly the strength of the reaction against the Protector's system than the union in a common enmity of Vane and Haselrig with the partizans of the Stuart pretender.

The Scientific Movement.

It was the steady rise of this tide of opposition in which Cromwell saw the doom of his cause. That it could permanently be upheld by the sword he knew to be impossible. What he had hoped for was the gradual winning of England to a sense of its worth. But every day the current of opinion ran more strongly against it. The army stood alone in its purpose. Papist and sceptic, mystic and ceremonialist, latitudinarian and Presbyterian, all were hostile. The very pressure of Cromwell's system gave birth to new forms of spiritual and intellectual revolt. Science, rationalism, secularism, sprang for the first time into vivid life in their

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protest against the forced concentration of human thought on the single topic of religion, the effort to prison religion itself in a system of dogma, and to narrow humanity with all its varied interests within the sphere of the merely spiritual. Nothing is more significant, though to Cromwell nothing would have been more unintelligible, than the simple story which tells us how from the vexed problems, political and religious, of the times, men turned to the peaceful study of the natural world about them. Bacon had already called men with a trumpet-voice to such studies; but in England at least Bacon stood before his age. The beginnings of physical science were more slow and timid there than in any country of Europe. Only two discoveries of any real value came from English research before the Restoration; the first, Gilbert's discovery of terrestrial magnetism in the close of Elizabeth's reign; the next, the great discovery of the circulation of the blood, which was taught by Harvey in the reign of James. Apart from these illustrious names England took little share in the scientific movement of the continent; and her whole energies seemed to be whirled into the vortex of theology and politics by the Civil War.

But the war had not reached its end when, in 1645, a little group of students were to be seen in London, men "inquisitive," says one of them, "into natural philosophy and other parts of human learning, and particularly of what had been called the New Philosophy . . . which from the times of Galileo at Florence, and Sir Francis Bacon (Lord Verulam) in England, hath been much cultivated in Italy, France, Germany, and other parts abroad, as well as with us in England." The strife of the time indeed aided in directing the minds of men to natural inquiries. "To have been always tossing about some theological question," says the first historian of the Royal Society, Bishop Sprat, "would have been to have made that their private diversion, the excess of which they disliked in the public. To have been eternally musing on

civil business and the distresses of the country was too melancholy a reflection. It was nature alone which could pleasantly entertain them in that estate." Foremost in the group stood Doctors Wallis and Wilkins, whose removal to Oxford, which had just been reorganized by the Puritan Visitors, divided the little company in 1648 into two societies, one at the university, the other remaining at the capital. The Oxford society, which was the more important of the two, held its meetings at the lodgings of Dr. Wilkins, who had become Warden of Wadham College; and added to the names of its members that of the eminent mathematician Dr. Ward, and that of the first of English economists, Sir William Petty. "Our business," Wallis tells us, "was (precluding matters of theology and State affairs) to discourse and consider of philosophical enquiries and such as related thereunto, as Physick, Anatomy, Geometry, Astronomy, Navigation, Statics, Magnetics, Chymicks, Mechanicks, and Natural Experiments: with the state of these studies, as then cultivated at home and abroad. We then discoursed of the circulation of the blood, the valves in the *venæ lacteæ*, the lymphatic vessels, the Copernican hypothesis, the nature of comets and new stars, the satellites of Jupiter, the oval shape of Saturn, the spots in the sun and its turning on its own axis, the inequalities and selenography of the moon, the several phases of Venus and Mercury, the improvement of telescopes, the grinding of glasses for that purpose, the weight of air, the possibility or impossibility of vacuities, and Nature's abhorrence thereof, the Torricellian experiment in quicksilver, the descent of heavy bodies and the degree of acceleration therein, and divers other things of like nature."

The Latitudinarians.

To what great results this protest against the Puritan concentration of all human thought on spiritual issues was to lead none could foresee. But results almost as great were to spring from the protest against the Puritan dogmatism which gave birth to the Latitudinarians. Whatever verdict history may pronounce on Falkland's political

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career, his name must remain memorable in the history of religious thought. A new era in English theology began with the speculations of the men he gathered round him in his country house at Great Tew in the years that preceded the meeting of the Long Parliament. Their work was above all to deny the authority of tradition in matters of faith, as Bacon had denied it in matters of physical research; and to assert in the one field as in the other the supremacy of reason as a test of truth. Of the authority of the Church, its Fathers, and its Councils, John Hales, a Canon of Windsor, and a friend of Laud, said briefly "it is none." He dismissed with contempt the accepted test of universality. "Universality is such a proof of truth as truth itself is ashamed of. The most singular and strongest part of human authority is properly in the wisest and the most virtuous, and these, I trow, are not the most universal." William Chillingworth, a man of larger if not keener mind, had been taught by an early conversion to Catholicism, and by a speedy return, the insecurity of any basis for belief but that of private judgement. In his "Religion of Protestants" he set aside ecclesiastical tradition or Church authority as grounds of faith in favour of the Bible, but only of the Bible as interpreted by the common reason of men. Jeremy Taylor, the most brilliant of English preachers, a sufferer like Chillingworth on the royalist side during the troubles, and who was rewarded at the Restoration with the bishopric of Down, limited even the authority of the Scriptures themselves. Reason was the one means which Taylor approved of in interpreting the Bible; but the certainty of the conclusions which reason drew from the Bible varied, as he held, with the conditions of reason itself. In all but the simplest truths of natural religion "we are not sure not to be deceived." The deduction of points of belief from the words of the Scriptures was attended with all the uncertainty and liability to error which sprang from the infinite variety of human understandings, the difficulties which hinder the discovery

of truth, and the influences which divert the mind from accepting or rightly estimating it.

It was plain to a mind like Chillingworth's that this denial of authority, this perception of the imperfection of reason in the discovery of absolute truth, struck as directly at the root of Protestant dogmatism as at the root of Catholic infallibility. "If Protestants are faulty in this matter [of claiming authority] it is for doing it too much and not too little. This presumptuous imposing of the senses of man upon the words of God, of the special senses of man upon the general words of God, and laying them upon men's consciences together under the equal penalty of death and damnation, this vain conceit that we can speak of the things of God better than in the words of God, this deifying our own interpretations and tyrannous enforcing them upon others, this restraining of the word of God from that latitude and generality, and the understandings of men from that liberty wherein Christ and His apostles left them, is and hath been the only foundation of all the schisms of the Church, and that which makes them immortal." In his "Liberty of Prophecying" Jeremy Taylor pleaded the cause of toleration with a weight of argument which hardly required the triumph of the Independents and the shock of Naseby to drive it home. But the freedom of conscience which the Independent founded on the personal communion of each soul with God, the Latitudinarian founded on the weakness of authority and the imperfection of human reason. Taylor pleads even for the Anabaptist and the Romanist. He only gives place to the action of the civil magistrate in "those religions whose principles destroy government," and "those religions—if there be any such—which teach ill life." Hales openly professed that he would quit the Church to-morrow if it required him to believe that all that dissented from it must be damned. Chillingworth denounced persecution in words of fire. "Take away this persecution, burning, cursing, damning of men for not

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subscribing the words of men as the words of God; require of Christians only to believe Christ and to call no man master but Him; let them leave claiming infallibility that have no title to it, and let them that in their own words disclaim it, disclaim it also in their actions. . . . Protestants are inexcusable if they do offer violence to other men's consciences."

From the denunciation of intolerance the Latitudinarians passed easily to the dream of comprehension which had haunted every nobler soul since the "Utopia" of More. Hales based his loyalty to the Church of England on the fact that it was the largest and the most tolerant Church in Christendom. Chillingworth pointed out how many obstacles to comprehension were removed by such a simplification of belief as flowed from a rational theology, and asked, like More, for "such an ordering of the public service of God as that all who believe the Scripture and live according to it might without scruple or hypocrisy or protestation in any part join in it." Taylor, like Chillingworth, rested his hope of union on the simplification of belief. He saw a probability of error in all the creeds and confessions adopted by Christian Churches. "Such bodies of confessions and articles," he said, "must do much hurt." "He is rather the schismatic who makes unnecessary and inconvenient impositions, than he who disobeys them because he cannot do otherwise without violating his conscience." The Apostles' Creed in its literal meaning seemed to him the one term of Christian union which the Church had any right to impose.

Hobbes.

The impulse which such men were giving to religious speculation was being given to political and social inquiry by a mind of far greater keenness and power. Bacon's favourite secretary was Thomas Hobbes. "He was beloved by his Lordship," Aubrey tells us, "who was wont to have him walk in his delicate groves, where he did meditate; and when a notion darted into his mind, Mr. Hobbes was presently to write it down. And his

Lordship was wont to say that he did it better than any one else about him; for that many times when he read their notes he scarce understood what they writ, because they understood it not clearly themselves." The long life of Hobbes covers a memorable space in our history. He was born in the year of the victory over the Armada; he died in 1679 at the age of ninety-two, only nine years before the Revolution. His ability soon made itself felt, and in his earlier days he was the secretary of Bacon, and the friend of Ben Jonson and Lord Herbert of Cherbury. But it was not till the age of fifty-four, when he withdrew to France on the eve of the great Rebellion in 1642, that his speculations were made known to the world in his treatise "De Cive." He joined the exiled Court at Paris, and became mathematical tutor to Charles the Second, whose love and regard for him seems to have been real to the end. But his post was soon forfeited by the appearance of his "Leviathan" in 1651; he was forbidden to approach the Court, and returned to England, where he appears to have acquiesced in the rule of Cromwell.

His political speculations.

The Restoration brought Hobbes a pension; but both his works were condemned by Parliament, and "Hobbism" became, ere he died, a popular synonym for irreligion and immorality. Prejudice of this kind sounded oddly in the case of a writer who had laid down, as the two things necessary to salvation, faith in Christ and obedience to the law. But the prejudice sprang from a true sense of the effect which the Hobbist philosophy must necessarily have whether on the current religion or on the current notions of political and social morality. Hobbes was the first great English writer who dealt with the science of government from the ground, not of tradition, but of reason. It was in his treatment of man in the stage of human developement which he supposed to precede that of society that he came most roughly into conflict with the accepted beliefs. Men, in his theory, were by nature equal, and their only natural relation was a state of war.

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It was no innate virtue of man himself which created human society out of this chaos of warring strengths. Hobbes in fact denied the existence of the more spiritual sides of man's nature. His hard and narrow logic dissected every human custom and desire, and reduced even the most sacred to demonstrations of a prudent selfishness. Friendship was simply a sense of social utility to one another. The so-called laws of nature, such as gratitude or the love of our neighbour, were in fact contrary to the natural passions of man, and powerless to restrain them. Nor had religion rescued man by the interposition of a Divine will. Nothing better illustrates the daring with which the new scepticism was to break through the theological traditions of the older world than the pitiless logic with which Hobbes assailed the very theory of revelation. "To say God hath spoken to man in a dream, is no more than to say man dreamed that God hath spoken to him." "To say one hath seen a vision, or heard a voice, is to say he hath dreamed between sleeping and waking." Religion, in fact, was nothing more than "the fear of invisible powers;" and here, as in all other branches of human science, knowledge dealt with words and not with things.

It was man himself who for his own profit created society, by laying down certain of his natural rights and retaining only those of self-preservation. A Covenant between man and man originally created "that great Leviathan called the Commonwealth or State, which is but an artificial man, though of greater stature and strength than the natural, for whose protection and defence it was intended." The fiction of such an "original contract" has long been dismissed from political speculation, but its effect at the time of its first appearance was immense. Its almost universal acceptance put an end to the religious and patriarchal theories of society, on which Kingship had till now founded its claim of a Divine right to authority which no subject might question. But if Hobbes destroyed the old

ground of royal despotism, he laid a new and a firmer one. To create a society at all, he held that the whole body of the governed must have resigned all rights save that of self-preservation into the hands of a single ruler, who was the representative of all. Such a ruler was absolute, for to make terms with him implied a man making terms with himself. The transfer of rights was inalienable, and after generations were as much bound by it as the generation which made the transfer. As the head of the whole body, the ruler judged every question, settled the laws of civil justice or injustice, or decided between religion and superstition. His was a Divine Right, and the only Divine Right, because in him were absorbed all the rights of each of his subjects. It was not in any constitutional check that Hobbes looked for the prevention of tyranny, but in the common education and enlightenment as to their real end and the best mode of reaching it on the part of both subjects and Prince. And the real end of both was the weal of the Commonwealth at large. It was in laying boldly down this end of government, as well as in the basis of contract on which he made government repose, that Hobbes really influenced all later politics.

Cromwell's consciousness of failure.

That Cromwell discerned the strength of such currents of opinion as those which we have described may fairly be doubted. But he saw that Puritanism had missed its aim. He saw that the attempt to secure spiritual results by material force had failed, as it always fails. It had broken down before the indifference and resentment of the great mass of the people, of men who were neither lawless nor enthusiasts, but who clung to the older traditions of social order, and whose humour and good sense revolted alike from the artificial conception of human life which Puritanism had formed, and from its effort to force such a conception on a people by law. It broke down too before the corruption of the Puritans themselves. It was impossible to distinguish between the saint and the hypocrite

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as soon as godliness became profitable. Ashley Cooper, a sceptic in religion and a profligate in morals, was among "the loudest bagpipes of the squeaking train." Even amongst the really earnest Puritans prosperity disclosed a pride, a worldliness, a selfish hardness which had been hidden in the hour of persecution. What was yet more significant was the irreligious and sceptical temper of the younger generation which had grown up amidst the storms of the Civil War. The children even of the leading Puritans stood aloof from Puritanism. The eldest of Cromwell's sons made small pretensions to religion. Milton's nephews, though reared in his house, were writing satires against Puritan hypocrisy and contributing to collections of filthy songs. The two daughters of the great preacher, Stephen Marshall, were to figure as actresses on the infamous stage of the Restoration. The tone of the Protector's later speeches shows his consciousness that the ground was slipping from under his feet. He no longer dwells on the dream of a Puritan England, of a nation rising as a whole into a people of God. He falls back on the phrases of his youth, and the saints become again a "peculiar people," a remnant, a fragment among the nation at large.

Dissolution of the Parliament.

But with the consciousness of failure in realizing his ideal of government the charm of government was gone; and now to the weariness of power was added the weakness and feverish impatience of disease. Vigorous and energetic as Cromwell's life had seemed, his health was by no means as strong as his will; he had been struck down by intermittent fever in the midst of his triumphs both in Scotland and in Ireland, and during the past year he had suffered from repeated attacks of it. "I have some infirmities upon me," he owned twice over in his speech at the re-opening of the Parliament in January, 1658, after an adjournment of six months; and his feverish irritability was quickened by the public danger. No supplies had been voted, and the pay of the army was heavily in arrear,

while its temper grew more and more sullen at the appearance of the new Constitution and the re-awakening of the royalist intrigues. Cromwell had believed that his military successes would secure compliance with his demands; but the temper of the Commons was even more irritable than his own. Under the terms of the new Constitution the members excluded in the preceding year took their places again in the House; and it was soon clear that the Parliament reflected the general mood of the nation. The tone of the Commons became captious and quarrelsome. They still delayed the grant of supplies. Meanwhile a hasty act of the Protector in giving to his nominees in "the other House," as the new second chamber he had devised was called, the title of "Lords," kindled a strife between the two Houses which was busily fanned by Haselrig and other opponents of the Government. It was contended that the "other House" had under the new Constitution simply judicial and not legislative powers. Such a contention struck at once at Cromwell's work of restoring the old political forms of English life: and the reappearance of Parliamentary strife threw him at last, says an observer at his court, "into a rage and passion like unto madness." What gave weight to it was the growing strength of the royalist party, and its hopes of a coming rising. Such a rising had in fact been carefully prepared; and Charles with a large body of Spanish troops drew to the coast of Flanders to take advantage of it. His hopes were above all encouraged by the strife in the Commons, and their manifest dislike of the system of the Protectorate. It was this that drove Cromwell to action. Summoning his coach, by a sudden impulse, the Protector drove on the fourth of February with a few guards to Westminster; and, setting aside the remonstrances of Fleetwood, summoned the two Houses to his presence. "I do dissolve this Parliament," he ended a speech of angry rebuke, "and let God be judge between you and me."

Death of Cromwell.

Fatal as was the error, for the moment all went well.

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The army was reconciled by the blow levelled at its opponents, and a few murmurers who appeared in its ranks were weeded out by a careful remodelling. The triumphant officers vowed to stand or fall with his Highness. The danger of a royalist rising vanished before a host of addresses from the counties. Great news too came from abroad, where victory in Flanders, and the cession of Dunkirk in June, set the seal on Cromwell's glory. But the fever crept steadily on, and his looks told the tale of death to the Quaker, Fox, who met him riding in Hampton Court Park. "Before I came to him," he says, "as he rode at the head of his Life Guards, I saw and felt a waft of death go forth against him, and when I came to him he looked like a dead man." In the midst of his triumph Cromwell's heart was heavy in fact with the sense of failure. He had no desire to play the tyrant; nor had he any belief in the permanence of a mere tyranny. He clung desperately to the hope of bringing over the country to his side. He had hardly dissolved the Parliament before he was planning the summons of another, and angry at the opposition which his Council offered to the project. "I will take my own resolutions," he said gloomily to his household; "I can no longer satisfy myself to sit still, and make myself guilty of the loss of all the honest party and of the nation itself." But before his plans could be realized the overtaxed strength of the Protector suddenly gave way. Early in August 1658 his sickness took a more serious form. He saw too clearly the chaos into which his death would plunge England to be willing to die. "Do not think I shall die," he burst out with feverish energy to the physicians who gathered round him; "say not I have lost my reason! I tell you the truth. I know it from better authority than any you can have from Galen or Hippocrates. It is the answer of God himself to our prayers!" Prayer indeed rose from every side for his recovery, but death grew steadily nearer, till even Cromwell felt that his hour was come. "I would be willing to live," the dying man

murmured, "to be further serviceable to God and his people, but my work is done! Yet God will be with his people!" A storm which tore roofs from houses, and levelled huge trees in every forest, seemed a fitting prelude to the passing away of his mighty spirit. Three days later, on the third of September, the day which had witnessed his victories of Worcester and Dunbar, Cromwell quietly breathed his last.

Richard Cromwell, Protector.

So absolute even in death was his sway over the minds of men, that, to the wonder of the excited royalists, even a doubtful nomination on his death-bed was enough to secure the peaceful succession of his son, Richard Cromwell. Many in fact who had rejected the authority of his father submitted peaceably to the new Protector. Their motives were explained by Baxter, the most eminent among the Presbyterian ministers, in an address to Richard which announced his adhesion. "I observe," he says, "that the nation generally rejoice in your peaceable entrance upon the government. Many are persuaded that you have been strangely kept from participating in any of our late bloody contentions, that God might make you the healer of our breaches, and employ you in that Temple work which David himself might not be honoured with, though it was in his mind, because he shed blood abundantly and made great wars." The new Protector was a weak and worthless man; but the bulk of the nation were content to be ruled by one who was at any rate no soldier, no Puritan, and no innovator. Richard was known to be lax and worldly in his conduct, and he was believed to be conservative and even royalist in heart. The tide of reaction was felt even in his Council. Their first act was to throw aside one of the greatest of Cromwell's reforms and to fall back in the summons which they issued for a new Parliament on the old system of election. It was felt far more keenly in the tone of the new House of Commons when it met in January 1659. The republicans under Vane, backed adroitly by the members who were secretly royalist,

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fell hotly on Cromwell's system. The fiercest attack of all came from Sir Ashley Cooper, a Dorsetshire gentleman who had changed sides in the Civil War, had fought for the King and then for the Parliament, had been a member of Cromwell's Council, and had of late ceased to be a member of it. His virulent invective on "his Highness of deplorable memory, who with fraud and force deprived you of your liberty when living and entailed slavery on you at his death," was followed by an equally virulent invective against the army. "They have not only subdued their enemies," said Cooper, "but the masters who raised and maintained them! They have not only conquered Scotland and Ireland, but rebellious England too; and there suppressed a Malignant party of magistrates and laws."

Divisions in the army.

The army was quick with its reply. Already in the preceding November it had shown its suspicion of the new government by demanding the appointment of a soldier as General in the place of the new Protector, who had assumed the command. The tone of the Council of Officers now became so menacing that the Commons ordered the dismissal of all officers who refused to engage "not to disturb or interrupt the free meetings of Parliament." Richard ordered the Council of Officers to dissolve. Their reply was a demand for the dissolution of the Parliament; and with this demand, on the twenty-second of April, Richard was forced to comply. The purpose of the army however was still to secure a settled government; and setting aside the new Protector, whose weakness was now evident, they resolved to come to a reconciliation with the republican party, and to recall the fragment of the Commons whom they had expelled from St. Stephen's in 1653. The arrangement was quickly brought about; and in May, of the one hundred and sixty members who had continued to sit after the King's death, about ninety returned to their seats and resumed the administration of affairs. The continued exclusion of the members who had

been "purged" from the House in 1648, proved that no real intention existed of restoring a legal rule; and the soldiers trusted that the Rump whom they had restored to power would be bound to them by the growing danger both to republicanism and to religious liberty. But not even their passion for these "causes" could make men endure the rule of the sword. The House was soon at strife with the soldiers. In spite of Vane's counsels, it proposed a reform of the officers, and though a royalist rising in Cheshire during August threw the disputants for a moment together, the struggle revived as the danger passed away. A new hope indeed filled men's minds. Not only was the nation sick of military rule, but the army, unconquerable so long as it held together, at last showed signs of division. In Ireland and Scotland the troops protested against the attitude of their English comrades; and Monk, the commander of the Scottish army, threatened to march on London and free the Parliament from their pressure. The knowledge of these divisions encouraged Haselrig and his coadjutors in the Commons to demand the dismissal of Fleetwood and Lambert from their commands. They answered in October by driving the Parliament again from Westminster, and by marching under Lambert to the north to meet the army under Monk.

Return of Charles.

Lambert however suffered himself to be lured into inaction by negotiations, while Monk gathered a Convention at Edinburgh, and strengthened himself with money and recruits. His attitude was enough to rouse England to action. Portsmouth closed its gates against the delegates of the soldiers. The fleet declared against them. So rapidly did the tide of feeling rise throughout the country that the army at the close of December was driven to undo the work by recalling the Rump. But the concession only aided the force of resistance by shewing the weakness of the tyranny which England was resolute to throw off. Lambert's men fell from him, and finding

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his path clear, Monk, without revealing his purport, advanced rapidly to Coldstream, and crossed the border in the first days of 1660. His action broke the spell of terror which had weighed upon the country. The cry of "A free Parliament" ran like fire through the country. Not only Fairfax, who appeared in arms in Yorkshire, but the ships on the Thames and the mob which thronged the streets of London caught up the cry. Still steadily advancing, but lavishing protestations of loyalty to the Rump while he accepted petitions for a "Free Parliament," Monk on the third of February entered London unopposed. From the moment of his entry the restoration of the Stuarts became inevitable. The army, resolute as it still remained for the maintenance of "the cause," was deceived by Monk's declarations of loyalty to it, and rendered powerless by his adroit dispersion of the troops over the country. At the instigation of Ashley Cooper, those who remained of the members who had been excluded from the House of Commons in 1648 again forced their way into Parliament, and at once resolved on a dissolution and the election of a new House of Commons. The dissolution in March was followed by a last struggle of the army for its old supremacy. Lambert escaped from the Tower and called his fellow-soldiers to arms; but he was hotly pursued, overtaken, and routed near Daventry; and on the twenty-fifth of April the new House, which bears the name of the Convention, assembled at Westminster. It had hardly taken the solemn League and Covenant which showed its Presbyterian temper, and its leaders had only begun to draw up terms on which the King's restoration might be assented to, when they found that Monk was in negotiation with the exiled Court. All exaction of terms was now impossible; a Declaration from Breda, in which Charles promised a general pardon, religious toleration, and satisfaction to the army, was received with a burst of national enthusiasm; and the old Constitution was restored by a solemn vote of the Convention, "that

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according to the ancient and fundamental laws of this Kingdom, the government is, and ought to be, by King, Lords, and Commons." The King was at once invited to hasten to his realm; and on the twenty-fifth of May Charles landed at Dover, and made his way amidst the shouts of a great multitude to Whitehall. "It is my own fault," laughed the new King with characteristic irony, "that I had not come back sooner; for I find nobody who does not tell me he has always longed for my return."

Fall of Puritanism

In his progress to the capital Charles passed in review the soldiers assembled on Blackheath. Betrayed by their general, abandoned by their leaders, surrounded as they were by a nation in arms, the gloomy silence of their ranks awed even the careless King with a sense of danger. But none of the victories of the New Model were so glorious as the victory which it won over itself. Quietly, and without a struggle, as men who bowed to the inscrutable will of God, the farmers and traders who had dashed Rupert's chivalry to pieces on Naseby field, who had scattered at Worcester the "army of the aliens," and driven into helpless flight the sovereign that now came "to enjoy his own again," who had renewed beyond sea the glories of Cressy and Agincourt, had mastered the Parliament, had brought a King to justice and the block, had given laws to England, and held even Cromwell in awe, became farmers and traders again, and were known among their fellow-men by no other sign than their greater soberness and industry. And, with them, Puritanism laid down the sword. It ceased from the long attempt to build up a kingdom of God by force and violence, and fell back on its truer work of building up a kingdom of righteousness in the hearts and consciences of men. It was from the moment of its seeming fall that its real victory began. As soon as the wild orgy of the Restoration was over, men began to see that nothing that was really worthy in the work of Puritanism had been undone. The revels of Whitehall, the scepticism and debauchery of courtiers,

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the corruption of statesmen, left the mass of Englishmen what Puritanism had made them, serious, earnest, sober in life and conduct, firm in their love of Protestantism and of freedom. In the Revolution of 1688 Puritanism did the work of civil liberty which it had failed to do in that of 1642. It wrought out through Wesley and the revival of the eighteenth century the work of religious reform which its earlier efforts had only thrown back for a hundred years. Slowly but steadily it introduced its own seriousness and purity into English society, English literature, English politics. The history of English progress since the Restoration, on its moral and spiritual sides, has been the history of Puritanism.

BOOK VIII.

THE REVOLUTION.

1660—1760.

AUTHORITIES FOR BOOK VIII.

The social change of the Restoration is illustrated by the picture of court life in Anthony Hamilton's "Memoirs of the Count de Grammont," by the memoirs of Reresby, Pepys and Evelyn, and the dramatic works of Wycherly and Etherege. For the general character of its comedy see Lord Macaulay's "Essay on the Dramatists of the Restoration." The histories of the Royal Society by Thompson or Wade, with Sir D. Brewster's "Biography of Newton," preserve the earlier annals of English Science, which are condensed by Hallam in his "Literary History" (vol. iv.). Clarendon gives a detailed account of his own ministry in his "Life," which forms a continuation of his "History of the Rebellion." The relations of the Church and the Dissenters during this period may be seen in Neal's "History of the Puritans," Calamy's "Memoirs of the Ejected Ministers," Mr. Dixon's "Life of Penn," Baxter's "Autobiography," and Bunyan's account of his sufferings in his various works. For the political story of the period as a whole our best authorities are Bishop Kennet's "Register," and Burnet's lively "History of my own Times." The memoirs of Sir W. Temple, with his correspondence, are of great value up to their close in 1679. Mr. Christie's "Life of Shaftesbury" is a defence and in some ways a successful defence, of that statesman's career and of the Whig policy at this time, which may be studied also in Earl Russell's life of his ancestor, William, Lord Russell. To these we may add the fragments of James the Second's autobiography preserved in Macpherson's "Original Papers" (of very various degrees of value), the "Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland" by Dalrymple, the first to discover the real secret of the negotiations with France, M. Mignet's "Négotiations relatives à la Succession d'Espagne," a work indispensable for a knowledge of foreign affairs during this period, Welwood's "Memoirs," and Luttrell's "Diary."

Throughout the whole reign of Charles the Second Hallam's "Constitutional History" is singularly judicious and full in its information. Lingard becomes of importance during this period from the original materials to which he has had access, as well as from his clear and dispassionate statement of the Catholic side of the question. Ranke in his "History of the Seventeenth Century" has thrown great light

on the diplomatic history of the later Stuart reigns: on internal and constitutional points he is cool and dispassionate but of less value. The great work of Lord Macaulay, which practically ends at the Peace of Ryswick, is continued by Lord Stanhope in his "History of England under Queen Anne," and his "History of England from the Peace of Utrecht." For Marlborough the main authority must be the Duke's biography by Archdeacon Coxe with his "Despatches." The character of the Tory opposition may be studied in Swift's Journal to Stella and his political tracts, as well as in Bolinbroke's correspondence. The French side of the war and negotiations has been given by M. Henri Martin ("Histoire de France") in what is the most accurate and judicious portion of his work. For the earlier period of the Georges Coxe's "Life of Sir Robert Walpole," Horace Walpole's "Memoirs of the Reign of George the Second," and Lord Hervey's amusing "Memoirs from the Accession of George the Second to the Death of Queen Caroline," give the main materials on the one side; Bolinbroke's "Patriot King," his "Letter to Sir W. Wyndham," and his correspondence afford some insight into the other. Horace Walpole's "Letters to Sir Horace Mann" give a minute account of his father's fall.

For the elder Pitt we have the Chatham Correspondence, a life by Thackeray, and two brilliant Essays by Lord Macaulay. Another of Lord Macaulay's Essays may be used with Sir John Malcolm's biography for the life of Lord Clive and the early history of British India, a fuller account of which may of course be found in general histories of India, such as that by James Mill. Carlyle's Frederick the Great contains a picturesque recital of the Seven Years' War, and of England's share in it; while the earlier relations of England and Frederick may be studied more coolly and thoroughly in Ranke's "Nine Books of Prussian History," published in an English version under the name of his "History of Prussia." The earlier part of the "Annual Register," which begins in 1758, has been attributed to Burke. Southey's biography, or the more elaborate life by Tyerman, gives an account of Wesley and the movement he headed.

CHAPTER I.

THE RESTORATION, 1660–1667.

The New England.

THE entry of Charles the Second into Whitehall marked a deep and lasting change in the temper of the English people. With it modern England began. The influences which had up to this time moulded our history, the theological influence of the Reformation, the monarchical influence of the new kingship, the feudal influence of the Middle Ages, the yet earlier influence of tradition and custom, suddenly lost power over the minds of men. From the moment of the Restoration we find ourselves all at once among the great currents of thought and activity which have gone on widening and deepening from that time to this. The England around us becomes our own England, an England whose chief forces are industry and science, the love of popular freedom and of law, an England which presses steadily forward to a larger social justice and equality, and which tends more and more to bring every custom and tradition, religious, intellectual, and political, to the test of pure reason.

Between modern thought, on some at least of its more important sides, and the thought of men before the Restoration there is a great gulf fixed. A political thinker in the present day would find it equally hard to discuss any

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point of statesmanship with Lord Burleigh or with Oliver Cromwell. He would find no point of contact between their ideas of national life or national welfare, their conception of government or the ends of government, their mode of regarding economical and social questions, and his own. But no gulf of this sort parts us from the men who followed the Restoration. From that time to this, whatever differences there may have been as to the practical conclusions drawn from them, there has been a substantial agreement as to the grounds of our political, our social, our intellectual, and religious life. Paley would have found no difficulty in understanding Tillotson. Newton and Sir Humphry Davy could have talked together without a sense of severance. There would have been nothing to hinder a perfectly clear discussion on government or law between John Locke and Jeremy Bentham.

The Social Revolt.

The change from the old England to the new is so startling that we are apt to look on it as a more sudden change than it really was; and the outer aspect of the Restoration does much to strengthen this impression of suddenness. The whole face of England was changed in an instant. All that was noblest and best in Puritanism was whirled away with its pettiness and its tyranny in the current of the nation's hate. Religion had been turned into a system of political and social oppression, and it fell with that system's fall. Godliness became a byword of scorn; sobriety in dress, in speech, in manners was flouted as a mark of the detested Puritanism. Butler in his "Hudibras" poured insult on the past with a pedantic buffoonery for which the general hatred, far more than its humour, secured a hearing. Archbishop Sheldon listened to the mock sermon of a Cavalier who held up the Puritan phrase and the Puritan twang to ridicule in his hall at Lambeth. Duelling and raking became the marks of a fine gentleman; and grave divines winked at the follies of "honest fellows" who fought, gambled, swore, drank, and ended a day of debauchery by a night in the gutter. Life among men of

fashion vibrated between frivolity and excess. One of the comedies of the time tells the courtier that "he must dress well, dance well, fence well, have a talent for love-letters, an agreeable voice, be amorous and discreet—but not too constant." To graces such as these the rakes of the Restoration added a shamelessness and a brutality which passes belief. Lord Rochester was a fashionable poet, and the titles of some of his poems are such as no pen of our day could copy. Sir Charles Sedley was a fashionable wit, and the foulness of his words made even the porters of Covent Garden pelt him from the balcony when he ventured to address them. The Duke of Buckingham is a fair type of the time, and the most characteristic event in the Duke's life was a duel in which he consummated his seduction of Lady Shrewsbury by killing her husband, while the Countess in disguise as a page held his horse for him and looked on at the murder.

The Comedy of the Restoration.

Vicious as the stage was when it opened its doors again on the fall of the Commonwealth it only reflected the general vice of the day. The Comedy of the Restoration borrowed everything from the contemporary Comedy of France save the poetry, the delicacy, and good taste which there veiled its grossness. Seduction, intrigue, brutality, cynicism, debauchery, found fitting expression on the English stage in dialogue of a studied and deliberate foulness, which even its wit fails to redeem from disgust. Wycherly, the popular playwright of the time, remains the most brutal among all dramatists; and nothing gives so damning an impression of his day as the fact that he found actors to repeat his words and audiences to applaud them. Men such as Wycherly gave Milton models for the Belial of his great poem, "than whom a spirit more lewd fell not from heaven, or more gross to love vice for itself." The dramatist piques himself on the frankness and "plain dealing" which painted the world as he saw it, a world of brawls and assignations, of orgies at Vauxhall and fights with the watch, of lies and *doubles-entendres*, of knaves and dupes,

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of men who sold their daughters, and women who cheated their husbands. But the cynicism of Wycherly was no greater than that of the men about him; and in mere love of what was vile, in contempt of virtue and disbelief in purity or honesty, the King himself stood ahead of any of his subjects.

The New Rationalism.

It is easy however to exaggerate the extent of this reaction. So far as we can judge from the memoirs of the time its more violent forms were practically confined to the capital and the court. The mass of Englishmen were satisfied with getting back their may-poles and mince-pies; and a large part of the people remained Puritan in life and belief though they threw aside many of the outer characteristics of Puritanism. Nor was the revolution in feeling as sudden as it seemed. Even if the political strength of Puritanism had remained unbroken its social influence must soon have ceased. The young Englishmen who grew up in the midst of civil war knew nothing of the bitter tyranny which gave its zeal and fire to the religion of their fathers. From the social and religious anarchy around them, from the endless controversies and discussions of the time, they drank in the spirit of scepticism, of doubt, of free enquiry. If religious enthusiasm had broken the spell of ecclesiastical tradition its own extravagance broke the spell of religious enthusiasm; and the new generation turned in disgust to try forms of political government and spiritual belief by the cooler and less fallible test of reason.

It is this rationalizing tendency of the popular mind, this indifference to the traditions and ideals of the past, this practical and experimental temper, which found its highest expression in the sudden popularity of the pursuit of physical science. Of the two little companies of enquirers whom we have already noticed as gathering at the close of the Civil War, that which remained in the capital and had at last been broken up by the troubles of the Second Protectorate was revived at the Restoration by

the return to London of the more eminent members of the group which had assembled at Oxford. But the little company of philosophers had hardly begun their meetings at Gresham College when they found themselves objects of a general interest. Science suddenly became the fashion of the day. Charles the Second was himself a fair chymist, and took a keen interest in the problems of navigation. The Duke of Buckingham varied his freaks of rhyming, drinking, and fiddling by fits of devotion to his laboratory. Poets like Dryden and Cowley, courtiers like Sir Robert Murray and Sir Kenelm Digby, joined the scientific company to which in token of his sympathy with it the King gave the title of "The Royal Society." The curious glass toys called Prince Rupert's drops recall the scientific enquiries which amused the old age of the great cavalry-leader of the Civil War. Wits and fops crowded to the meetings of the new Society. Statesmen like Lord Somers felt honoured at being chosen its presidents.

English Science.

The definite establishment of the Royal Society in 1662 marks the opening of a great age of scientific discovery in England. Almost every year of the half-century which followed saw some step made to a wider and truer knowledge of physical fact. Our first national observatory rose at Greenwich, and modern astronomy began with the long series of observations which immortalized the name of Flamsteed. His successor, Halley, undertook the investigation of the tides, of comets, and of terrestrial magnetism. Hooke improved the microscope and gave a fresh impulse to microscopical research. Boyle made the air-pump a means of advancing the science of pneumatics, and became the founder of experimental chymistry. Wilkins pointed forward to the science of philology in his scheme of a universal language. Sydenham introduced a careful observation of nature and facts which changed the whole face of medicine. The physiological researches of Willis first threw light upon the structure of the brain. Woodward was the founder of mineralogy. In his edition of

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Willoughby's "Ornithology," and in his own "History of Fishes," John Ray was the first to raise zoology to the rank of a science; and the first scientific classification of animals was attempted in his "Synopsis of Quadrupeds." Modern botany began with Ray's "History of Plants," and the researches of an Oxford professor, Robert Morrison; while Grow divided with Malpighi the credit of founding the study of vegetable physiology.

But great as some of these names undoubtedly are they are lost in the lustre of Isaac Newton. Newton was born at Woolsthorpe in Lincolnshire on Christmas-day, 1642, the memorable year which saw the outbreak of the Civil War. In the year of the Restoration he entered Cambridge, where the teaching of Isaac Barrow quickened his genius for mathematics, and where the method of Descartes had superseded the older modes of study. From the close of his Cambridge career his life became a series of great physical discoveries. At twenty-three he facilitated the calculation of planetary movements by his theory of Fluxions. The optical discoveries to which he was led by his experiments with the prism, and which he partly disclosed in the lectures which he delivered as Mathematical Professor at Cambridge, were embodied in the theory of light which he laid before the Royal Society on becoming a Fellow of it. His discovery of the law of gravitation had been made as early as 1666; but the erroneous estimate which was then generally received of the earth's diameter prevented him from disclosing it for sixteen years; and it was not till 1687, on the eve of the Revolution, that the "Principia" revealed to the world his new theory of the Universe.

The Latitudinarian Theology.

It is impossible to do more than indicate in such a summary as we have given the wonderful activity of directly scientific thought which distinguished the age of the Restoration. But the sceptical and experimental temper of mind which this activity disclosed was telling at the same time upon every phase of the world around it.

We see the attempt to bring religious speculation into harmony with the conclusions of reason and experience in the school of Latitudinarian theologians which sprang from the group of thinkers that gathered on the eve of the Civil War round Lord Falkland at Great Tew. With the Restoration the Latitudinarians came at once to the front. They were soon distinguished from both Puritans and High Churchmen by their opposition to dogma, by their preference of reason to tradition whether of the Bible or the Church, by their basing religion on a natural theology, by their aiming at rightness of life rather than at correctness of opinion, by their advocacy of toleration and comprehension as the grounds of Christian unity. Chillingworth and Taylor found successors in the restless good sense of Burnet, the enlightened piety of Tillotson, and the calm philosophy of Bishop Butler. From this moment indeed the work of English theologians turned from the bold assertion of the supremacy of revealed truth over natural reason to a more cautious assertion of the essential harmony of the one with the other. Boyle varied his philosophical experiments by demonstrations of the unity of dogmatic and natural religion. So moderate and philosophical was the temper displayed by Cudworth in his "Intellectual System of the Universe," that the bigots of his day charged him with the atheistic principles which he was endeavouring to refute. But the change of tone in the theologians of the Reformation was itself an indication of the new difficulties which theology had to meet. The bold scepticism of Hobbes was adopted by courtiers and politicians. Charles himself was divided between superstition and Hobbism. Shaftesbury was a Deist. The bulk of the leading statesmen of the time looked on religious questions in a purely political light.

Political Philosophy.

The impulse which was carrying religious speculation into regions hitherto strange to it told equally on political and social enquiry. The researches of Sir Josiah Child

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and still more of Sir William Petty not only threw light on the actual state of English trade but pointed forward to the future science of Political Economy. For the moment however philosophical speculation on the nature of Government eclipsed the interest of statistical research. Though the Restoration brought Hobbes a pension his two great works were condemned by Parliament, and Hobbism became ere he died a popular synonym for political as well as religious immorality. But in spite of the bitter resistance offered to it his assertion of a rational method of political enquiry superseded more and more the older doctrines of a religious and traditional polity. After Clarendon no English statesman really believed in any divine right of the sovereign he served; and Charles himself probably believed it still less than his ministers. The fiction of a contract between governor and governed, on which Hobbes built up his theory of a state, passed silently into general acceptance. John Locke, the foremost political thinker of the Restoration, derived political authority like Hobbes from the consent of the governed, and adopted the common weal as the end of Government. But the practical temper of the time moulded the new theory into a form which contrasted strangely with that given to it by its first inventor. The political philosophy of Locke indeed was little more than a formal statement of the conclusions which the bulk of Englishmen had drawn from the great struggle of the Civil War. In his theory the people remain passively in possession of the power which they have delegated to the Prince, and have the right to withdraw it if it be used for purposes inconsistent with the end which society was formed to promote. To the origin of all power in the people, and the end of all power for the people's good—the two great doctrines of Hobbes—Locke added the right of resistance, the responsibility of princes to their subjects for a due execution of their trust, and the supremacy of legislative assemblies as expressing the voice of the people itself.

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It was in this modified and enlarged form that the new political philosophy found general acceptance after the Revolution of 1688. But powerful as was its influence in the thirty years which separated that event from the Restoration it remained during that period an influence which told but slowly on the people at large. It is indeed this severance for the time between the thinking classes and the general bulk of the nation which makes its history so difficult and perplexing. While sceptics and divines were drifting to questions which involved the very being of religion itself the mass of Englishmen were still without a doubt, and dead to every religious struggle save the old struggle of Protestantism with the Pope. While statesmen and philosophers were smiling at Sir Robert Filmer and his "Patriarchal Theory of Government," the people remained blind to any notion of an original contract, and every pulpit resounded with the doctrine of a divine right of kings. It was only by slow steps, and above all by the practical stress of events, that England was driven forward to religious toleration or to the establishment of parliamentary government in the place of monarchy.

The Period of Transition.

Slowly and gradually however it was driven forward to both. Even at the outset of the Restoration the temper of England had in fact drifted far from the past to which it thought to return. The work of the Long Parliament indeed seemed to be undone when Charles entered Whitehall. Not only was the Monarchy restored but it was restored without restriction or condition; and of the two great influences which had hitherto served as checks on its power the first, that of Puritanism, had become hateful to the nation at large, while the second, the tradition of constitutional liberty, was discredited by the issue of the Civil War. But, wild as was the tumult of demonstrative loyalty, not one of the great steps towards constitutional freedom which had been gained by the patriots of 1641 was really lost. The prerogatives for which Charles the First had struggled were quietly relinquished by his son.

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The very cavaliers who had welcomed the King to "his own again" never dreamt of restoring the system of government which their opponents had overthrown. Twenty years of parliamentary rule, however broken and mixed with political and religious tyranny, had made the return to ship money or monopolies or the Star Chamber impossible. Men had become so accustomed to freedom that they forgot how recent a thing its unquestioned existence was. From the first therefore the great "revolution of the seventeenth century," as it has been called, went steadily on. The supreme power was gradually transferred from the Crown to the House of Commons. Step by step Parliament drew nearer to a solution of the political problem which had so long foiled its efforts, the problem how to make its will the law of administrative action without itself undertaking the task of administration. It is only by carefully fixing our eyes on this transfer of power, and by noting the successive steps towards its realization, that we can understand the complex history of the Restoration and the Revolution.

Charles the Second.

Changed to the very core, yet hardly conscious of the change, drifting indeed steadily towards a wider knowledge and a firmer freedom, but still a mere medley of Puritan morality and social revolt, of traditional loyalty and political scepticism, of bigotry and free enquiry, of science and Popish plots, the England of the Restoration was reflected in its King. What his subjects saw in Charles the Second was a pleasant, brown-faced gentleman playing with his spaniels, or drawing caricatures of his ministers, or flinging cakes to the waterfowl in the park. To all outer seeming Charles was the most consummate of idlers. "He delighted," says one of his courtiers, "in a bewitching kind of pleasure called sauntering." The business-like Pepys discovered, as he brought his work to the Council Board, that "the King do mind nothing but pleasures, and hates the very sight

or thoughts of business." That Charles had great natural parts no one doubted. In his earlier days of defeat and danger he showed a cool courage and presence of mind which never failed him in the many perilous moments of his reign. His temper was pleasant and social, his manners perfect, and there was a careless freedom and courtesy in his address which won over everybody who came into his presence. His education indeed had been so grossly neglected that he could hardly read a plain Latin book; but his natural quickness and intelligence showed itself in his pursuit of chymistry and anatomy, and in the interest he showed in the scientific enquiries of the Royal Society. Like Peter the Great his favourite study was that of naval architecture, and he piqued himself on being a clever shipbuilder. He had some little love too for art and poetry, and a taste for music. But his shrewdness and vivacity showed themselves most in his endless talk. He was fond of telling stories, and he told them with a good deal of grace and humour. He held his own fairly with the wits of his Court, and bandied repartees on equal terms with Sedley or Buckingham. Even Rochester in his merciless epigram was forced to own that "Charles never said a foolish thing." He had inherited in fact his grandfather's gift of pithy sayings, and his habitual irony often gave an amusing turn to them. When his brother, the most unpopular man in England, solemnly warned him of plots against his life, Charles laughingly bade him set all fear aside. "They will never kill me, James," he said, "to make you king."

But courage and wit and ability seemed to have been bestowed on Charles in vain. He only laughed when Tom Killigrew told him frankly that badly as things were going on there was one man whose industry could set them right, "and this is one Charles Stuart, who now spends his time in using his lips about the Court and hath no other employment." Charles made no secret in fact

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of his hatred of business. Nor did he give to outer observers any sign of ambition. The one thing he seemed in earnest about was sensual pleasure, and he took his pleasure with a cynical shamelessness which roused the disgust even of his shameless courtiers. Mistress followed mistress, and the guilt of a troop of profligate women was blazoned to the world by the gift of titles and estates. The royal bastards were set amongst English nobles. The ducal house of Grafton springs from the King's adultery with Barbara Palmer, whom he created Duchess of Cleveland. The Dukes of St. Albans owe their origin to his intrigue with Nell Gwynn, a player and a courtezan. Louise de Querouaille, a mistress sent by France to win him to its interests, became Duchess of Portsmouth and ancestress of the house of Richmond. An earlier mistress, Lucy Walters, had made him father in younger days of the boy whom he raised to the Dukedom of Monmouth, and to whom the Dukes of Buccleuch trace their line. But Charles was far from being content with these recognized mistresses or with a single form of self-indulgence. Gambling and drinking helped to fill up the vacant moments when he could no longer toy with his favourites or bet at Newmarket. No thought of remorse or of shame seems ever to have crossed his mind. "He could not think God would make a man miserable," he said once, "only for taking a little pleasure out of the way." From shame he was shielded by his cynical disbelief in human virtue. Virtue indeed he regarded simply as a trick by which clever hypocrites imposed upon fools. Honour among men seemed to him as mere a pretence as chastity among women. Gratitude he had none, for he looked upon self-interest as the only motive of men's actions, and though soldiers had died and women had risked their lives for him, "he loved others as little as he thought they loved him." But if he felt no gratitude for benefits he felt no resentment for wrongs. He was incapable either of love or of hate. The only feel-

ing he retained for his fellow-men was that of an amused contempt.

It was difficult for Englishmen to believe that any real danger to liberty could come from an idler and a voluptuary such as Charles the Second. But in the very difficulty of believing this lay half the King's strength. He had in fact no taste whatever for the despotism of the Stuarts who had gone before him. His shrewdness laughed his grandfather's theories of Divine Right down the wind, while his indolence made such a personal administration as that which his father delighted in burthensome to him. He was too humorous a man to care for the pomp and show of power, and too good-natured a man to play the tyrant. But he believed as firmly as his father or his grandfather had believed in his right to a full possession of the older prerogatives of the Crown. He looked on Parliaments as they had looked on them with suspicion and jealousy. He clung as they had clung to the dream of a dispensing power over the execution of the laws. He regarded ecclesiastical affairs as lying within his own personal control, and viewed the interference of the two Houses with church matters as a sheer usurpation. Above all he detested the notion of ministerial responsibility to any but the King, or of a Parliamentary right to interfere in any way with the actual administration of public affairs. "He told Lord Essex," Burnet says, "that he did not wish to be like a Grand Signior, with some mutes about him, and bags of bowstrings to strangle men; but he did not think he was a king so long as a company of fellows were looking into his actions, and examining his ministers as well as his accounts." "A king," he thought, "who might be checked, and have his ministers called to an account, was but a king in name."

The King's Policy.

In other words Charles had no settled plan of tyranny, but he meant to rule as independently as he could, and from the beginning to the end of his reign there never was a moment when he was not doing something to carry out

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his aim. But he carried it out in a tentative, irregular fashion which it was as hard to detect as to meet. Whenever there was any strong opposition he gave way. If popular feeling demanded the dismissal of his ministers, he dismissed them. If it protested against his declaration of religious indulgence, he recalled it. If it cried for victims in the frenzy of the Popish Plot, he gave it victims till the frenzy was at an end. It was easy for Charles to yield and to wait, and just as easy for him to take up the thread of his purpose afresh the moment the pressure was over. There was one fixed resolve in fact which overrode every other thought in the King's mind, and this was a resolve "not to set out on his travels again." His father had fallen through a quarrel with the two Houses, and Charles was determined to remain on good terms with the Parliament till he was strong enough to pick a quarrel to his profit. At no time has party strife raged more fiercely; in no reign has the temper of the Parliament been more threatening to the Crown. But the cynicism of Charles enabled him to ride out storms which would have wrecked a better and a nobler King. He treated the Lords with an easy familiarity which robbed opposition of its seriousness. "Their debates amused him," he said in his indolent way; and he stood chatting before the fire while peer after peer poured invectives on his ministers, and laughed louder than the rest when Shaftesbury directed his coarsest taunts at the barrenness of the Queen. Courtiers were entrusted with the secret "management" of the Commons; obstinate country gentlemen were brought to the Royal closet to kiss the King's hand and listen to the King's pleasant stories of his escape after Worcester; and still more obstinate country gentlemen were bribed. Where bribes, flattery and management failed Charles was content to yield and to wait till his time came again.

Dissolution of the Union.

But even while yielding and waiting he never lost sight of the aim he had set himself. If he had no mind to play the tyrant, he was resolved to be something more than "a

King in name." If he could not get back all that his father had had he could go on patiently gathering up what fragments of the old royal power still survived, and availing himself of whatever new resources offered themselves. One means of recovering somewhat of the older authority of the Crown lay in the simple refusal to recognize the union of the three kingdoms. If he could not undo what the Puritans had done in England Charles could undo their work in Scotland and in Ireland. Before the Civil War these kingdoms had served as useful checks on English liberty, and by simply regarding the Union which the Long Parliament and the Protector had brought about as a nullity in law it was possible they might become checks again. In his refusal to recognize the Union Charles was supported by public opinion among his English subjects, partly from sheer abhorrence of changes wrought during "the troubles," and partly from a dread that the Scotch and Irish members would form a party in the English Parliament which would always be at the service of the Crown. In both the lesser kingdoms too a measure which seemed to restore somewhat of their national independence was for the moment popular.

Scotland and Ireland.

But the results of this step were quick in developing themselves. In Scotland the Covenant was at once abolished. The Scotch Parliament which assembled at Edinburgh, the Drunken Parliament as it was called, outdid the wildest loyalty of the English Cavaliers by annulling in a single Act all the proceedings of its predecessors during the last eight-and-twenty years. By this measure the whole existing Church system of Scotland was deprived of legal sanction. The General Assembly had already been prohibited from meeting by Cromwell; the kirk-sessions and ministers' synods were now suspended. The Scotch bishops were again restored to their spiritual preeminence and to their seats in Parliament. An iniquitous trial sent the Marquis of Argyle, the only noble strong enough to oppose the Royal will, to the block; and

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the government was entrusted to a knot of profligate statesmen till it fell into the hands of Lauderdale, one of the ablest and most unscrupulous of the King's ministers. Their policy was steadily directed to two purposes, the first, that of humbling Presbyterianism—as the force which could alone restore Scotland to freedom and enable her to lend aid as before to English liberty in any struggle with the Crown—the second, that of raising a royal army which might be ready in case of need to march over the border to the King's support. In Ireland the dissolution of the Union brought back the bishops to their sees; but whatever wish Charles may have had to restore the balance of Catholic and Protestant as a source of power to the Crown was baffled by the obstinate resistance of the Protestant settlers to any plans for redressing the confiscations of Cromwell. Five years of bitter struggle between the dispossessed loyalists and the new occupants left the Protestant ascendency unimpaired; and in spite of a nominal surrender of one-third of the confiscated estates to their old possessors hardly a sixth of the profitable land in the island remained in Catholic holding. The claims of the Duke of Ormond too made it necessary to leave the government in his hands, and Ormond's loyalty was too moderate and constitutional to lend itself to any of the schemes of absolute rule which played so great a part in the next reign under Tyrconnell.

The Royal Army.

But the severance of the two kingdoms from England was in itself a gain to the Royal authority; and Charles turned quietly to the building up of a royal army at home. A standing army had become so hateful a thing to the body of the nation, and above all to the royalists whom the New Model had trodden under foot, that it was impossible to propose its establishment. But in the mind of both Charles and his brother James, the Duke of York, their father's downfall had been owing to the want of a disciplined force which would have trampled out the first efforts of national resistance; and while disbanding the

New Model Charles availed himself of the alarm created by a mad rising of some Fifth-Monarchy men in London under an old soldier called Venner to retain five thousand horse and foot in his service under the name of his guards. A body of "gentlemen of quality and veteran soldiers, excellently clad, mounted, and ordered," was thus kept ready for service near the royal person; and in spite of the scandal which it aroused the King persisted, steadily but cautiously, in gradually increasing its numbers. Twenty years later it had grown to a force of seven thousand foot and one thousand seven hundred horse and dragoons at home, with a reserve of six fine regiments abroad in the service of the United Provinces.

Charles and English Politics.

But it was rather on policy than on open force that Charles counted for success. His position indeed was a strange and perplexing one. All the outer pomp of the monarchy had returned with the restoration. Charles, like his father, was served by the highest nobles on their knees. Nor had the theory of his position in appearance changed. The principle indeed of hereditary kingship had gained a new strength from the troubles of the last twenty years. The fall of the monarchy had been followed so closely by that of the other institutions, political and religious, of the realm, its restoration coincided so exactly with their revival, that the crown had become the symbol of that national tradition, that historical continuity, without which the practical sense of Englishmen felt then, as Burke felt afterwards, that men were "but as flies in a summer." How profound a disgust the violent interruption of this continuous progress by the clean sweep of the Civil War had left behind it was seen in the indifference with which measures such as the union of the three kingdoms or the reform of parliamentary representation were set aside as sharing in the general vice of the time from which they sprang. It was seen as vividly at even a later time in the instant ruin of Shaftesbury's popularity from the moment when he was believed to be plotting

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the renewal of civil war. But if the Monarchy was strengthened by its association with the tradition of constitutional freedom it was henceforth inseparably bound to the freedom which strengthened it. The Cavalier who had shouted for the King's return had shouted also for the return of a free Parliament. The very Chief Justice who asserted at the trial of the Regicides the personal freedom of the King from any responsibility to the nation asserted just as strongly that doctrine of ministerial responsibility against which Charles the First had struggled. "The law in all cases preserves the person of the King to be authorized," said Sir Orlando Bridgeman, "but what is done by his ministers unlawfully, there is a remedy against his ministers for it." It was the desire of every royalist to blot out the very memory of the troubles in which monarchy and freedom had alike disappeared, to take up again as if it had never been broken the thread of our political history. But the point at which even royalists took it up was not at the moment of the Tyranny, but at the moment of the Long Parliament's first triumph when that tyranny had been utterly undone. In his wish to revive those older claims of the crown which the Long Parliament had for ever set aside the young King found himself alone. His closest adherents, his warmest friends, were constitutional royalists of the temper of Falkland or Culpepper; partizans of an absolute monarchy, of such a monarchy as his grandfather had dreamed of and his father for a few years carried into practice, there now were none.

Charles and English Religion.

In his political aims therefore Charles could look for no help within his realm. Nor did he stand less alone in his religious aims. In heart, whether the story of his renunciation of Protestantism during his exile be true or no, he had long ceased to be a Protestant. Whatever religious feeling he had was on the side of Catholicism; he encouraged conversions among his courtiers, and the last act of his life was to seek formal admission into the Roman Church. But his feelings were rather political than

religious. The English Roman Catholics formed a far larger part of the population then than now, and their wealth and local influence gave them a political importance which they have long since lost. The Stuarts had taught them to look to the Crown for protection against the Protestant bigotry around them, and they repaid this shelter by aiding Charles the First in his war on the Parliament, and by liberally supplying his son with money during his exile. He had promised in return to procure toleration for their worship, and every motive of gratitude as well as self-interest led him to redeem his pledge. But he was already looking, however vaguely, to something more than Catholic toleration. He saw that despotism in the State could hardly co-exist with free enquiry and free action in matters of the conscience; and that government, in his own words, "was a safer and easier thing where the authority was believed infallible, and the faith and submission of the people were implicit." The difficulties in the way of such a religious change probably seemed the less to him from his long residence in Roman Catholic countries and from his own religious scepticism. Two years indeed after his restoration he had already despatched an agent to Rome to arrange the terms of a reconciliation between the Anglican Church and the Papacy. But though he counted much for the success of his project of toleration on taking advantage of the dissensions between Protestant Churchmen and Protestant Dissenters he soon discovered that in this or any wider religious project he stood utterly alone. Clarendon and the Cavaliers were as bitterly anti-Catholic as the wildest fanatic in his realm. For any real success in his religious as in his political aims he must look elsewhere than at home.

State of Europe.

Holland had been the first power to offer him its aid in the renewal of the old defensive alliance which had united the two countries before the Civil War, and it had accompanied its offer by hints of a heavy subsidy. But offers and hints were alike withdrawn when it was found that

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immense self-belief and self-confidence, and a temper utterly destitute indeed of real greatness, but with a dramatic turn for seeming to be great. As a politician Lewis had simply to reap the harvest which the two great Cardinals who went before him had sown. Both had used to the profit of France the exhaustion and dissension which the wars of religion had brought upon Europe. Richelieu turned the scale against the House of Austria by his alliance with Sweden, with the United Provinces, and with the Protestant princes of Germany; and the two great treaties by which Mazarin ended the Thirty Years' War, the Treaty of Westphalia and the Treaty of the Pyrenees, left the Empire disorganized and Spain powerless. From that moment indeed Spain sank into a strange decrepitude. Robbed of the chief source of her wealth by the independence of Holland, weakened at home by the revolt of Portugal, her infantry annihilated by Condé in his victory of Rocroi, her fleet ruined by the Dutch, her best blood drained away to the Indies, the energies of her people destroyed by the suppression of all liberty, civil or religious, her intellectual life crushed by the Inquisition, her industry crippled by the expulsion of the Moors, by financial oppression, and by the folly of her colonial system, the kingdom which under Philip the Second had aimed at the empire of the world lay helpless and exhausted under Philip the Fourth.

France and Spain.

The aim of Lewis was to carry on the policy of his predecessors, and above all to complete the ruin of Spain. The conquest of the Spanish provinces in the Netherlands would carry his border to the Scheldt. A more distant hope lay in the probable extinction of the Austrian line which now sat on the throne of Spain. By securing the succession to that throne for a French prince not only Castille and Aragon with the Spanish dependencies in Italy and the Netherlands but the Spanish empire in the New World would be added to the dominions of France. Nothing could save Spain but a union of the European

powers, and to prevent this union was the work to which the French negotiators were now bending their energies with singular success. The intervention of the Emperor was guarded against by a renewal of the old alliances between France and the lesser German princes. A league with the Turks gave the court of Vienna enough to do on its eastern border. The old league with Sweden, the old friendship with Holland, were skilfully maintained. England alone remained as a possible foe, and at this moment the policy of Charles bound England to the side of Lewis.

England and France.

France was the wealthiest of European powers, and her subsidies could free Charles from his dependence on the Parliament. The French army was the finest in the world, and French soldiers could put down, it was thought, any resistance from English patriots. The aid of Lewis could alone realize the aims of Charles, and Charles was willing to pay the price, that of a silent concurrence in his Spanish projects, which Lewis demanded for his aid. It was to France therefore, in spite of the resentment he felt at his treatment by her in his time of exile, that Charles turned in the earliest days of his reign. There was no trace as yet of any formal alliance, but two marriages showed the close connection which was to be established between the Kings. Henrietta, the sister of Charles, was wedded to the Duke of Orleans, the brother of Lewis: and this match served as the prelude to that of Charles himself with Catharine of Braganza, a daughter of the King of Portugal. The English ministers were dazzled by the dowry which the new Queen brought with her: half-a-million in money, the fortress of Tangier in the Mediterranean, the trading port of Bombay in the Indies, and a pledge of religious toleration for all English merchants throughout the Portuguese colonies. The world at large saw rather the political significance of the marriage. As the conquest of Portugal by Philip the Second had crowned the greatness of the

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Spanish monarchy, so with its revolt had begun the fall of Spain. To recover Portugal was the dream of every Spaniard, as to aid Portugal in the preservation of its independence was the steady policy of France. The Portuguese marriage, the Portuguese alliance which followed it, ranged England definitely amongst the friends of Lewis and the foes of Spain.

Charles and his first Ministry.

In England itself these indications of the King's foreign policy passed as yet almost without notice. The attention of the nation was naturally concentrated on the work of political and social restoration. What shape the new England would take, what was to be its political or religious form, was still uncertain. It was still doubtful which political or religious party had really the upper hand. The show of power lay as yet with the Presbyterians. It was by the Presbyterians that the chief part in the Restoration had in fact been played; and it was the Presbyterians who still almost exclusively possessed the magistracy and all local authority. The first ministry which Charles ventured to form bore on it the marks of a compromise between this powerful party and their old opponents. Its most influential member indeed was Sir Edward Hyde, the adviser of the King during his exile, who soon became Earl of Clarendon and Lord Chancellor. Lord Southampton, a steady royalist, accepted the post of Lord Treasurer; and the devotion of Ormond was rewarded with a dukedom and the dignity of Lord Steward. But the Presbyterian interest was represented by Monk, who remained Lord-General of the army with the title of Duke of Albemarle; and though the King's brother, James, Duke of York, was made Lord Admiral, the administration of the fleet was virtually in the hands of one of Cromwell's followers, Montagu, the new Earl of Sandwich. An old Puritan, Lord Say and Sele, was made Lord Privy Seal. Sir Ashley Cooper, a leading member of the same party, was rewarded for his activity in bringing about the Restoration by a barony and the office of

Chancellor of the Exchequer. Of the two Secretaries of State, the one, Nicholas, was a devoted Royalist; the other, Morice, was a steady Presbyterian. Of the thirty members of the Privy Council, twelve had borne arms against the King.

The Convention.

It was clear that such a ministry was hardly likely to lend itself to a mere policy of reaction, and the temper of the new Government therefore fell fairly in with the temper of the Convention when that body, after declaring itself a Parliament, proceeded to consider the measures which were requisite for a settlement of the nation. The Convention had been chosen under ordinances which excluded royalist "Malignants" from the right of voting; and the bulk of its members were men of Presbyterian sympathies, loyalist to the core, but as adverse to despotism as the Long Parliament itself. In its earlier days a member who asserted that those who had fought against the King were as guilty as those who cut off his head was sternly rebuked from the Chair. The first measure which was undertaken by the House, the Bill of Indemnity and Oblivion for all offences committed during the recent troubles, showed at once the moderate character of the Commons. In the punishment of the regicides indeed a Presbyterian might well be as zealous as a Cavalier. In spite of a Proclamation issued in the first days of his return, which virtually promised mercy to all the judges of the late King who surrendered themselves to justice, Charles pressed for revenge on those whom he regarded as his father's murderers, and the Lords went hotly with the King. It is to the credit of the Commons that they steadily resisted the cry for blood. By the original provisions of the Bill of Oblivion and Indemnity only seven of the living regicides were excluded from pardon; and though the rise of royalist fervour during the three months in which the bill was under discussion forced the House in the end to leave almost all to the course of justice, yet a clause which made a special Act of

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Parliament necessary for the execution of those who had surrendered under the Proclamation protected the lives of most of them. Twenty-eight of the King's Judges were in the end arraigned at the bar of a Court specially convened for their trial, but only thirteen were executed, and only one of these, General Harrison, had played any conspicuous part in the rebellion. Twenty others, who had been prominent in what were now called "the troubles" of the past twenty years, were declared incapable of holding office under the State: and by an unjustifiable clause which was introduced into the Act before its final adoption Sir Harry Vane and General Lambert, though they had taken no part in the King's death, were specially exempted from the general pardon.

Settlement of the Nation.

In dealing with the questions of property which arose from the confiscations and transfers of estates during the Civil Wars the Convention met with greater difficulties. No opposition was made to the resumption of all Crown-lands by the State, but the Convention desired to protect the rights of those who had purchased Church property and of those who were in actual possession of private estates which had been confiscated by the Long Parliament or by the government which succeeded it. The bills however which they prepared for this purpose were delayed by the artifices of Hyde; and at the close of the Session the bishops and the evicted royalists quietly re-entered into the occupation of their old possessions. The royalists indeed were far from being satisfied with this summary confiscation. Fines and sequestrations had impoverished all the steady adherents of the royal cause, and had driven many of them to forced sales of their estates; and a demand was made for compensation for their losses and the cancelling of these sales. Without such provisions, said the frenzied Cavaliers, the bill would be "a Bill of Indemnity for the King's enemies, and of Oblivion for his friends." But here the Convention stood firm. All transfers of property by sale were recognized as valid, and all claims

of compensation for losses by sequestration were barred by the Act.

From the settlement of the nation the Convention passed to the settlement of the relations between the nation and the Crown. So far was the constitutional work of the Long Parliament from being undone that its more important measures were silently accepted as the base of future government. Not a voice demanded the restoration of the Star Chamber or of monopolies or of the Court of High Commission; no one disputed the justice of the condemnation of Ship-money or the assertion of the sole right of Parliament to grant supplies to the Crown. The Militia indeed was placed in the King's hands; but the army was disbanded, though Charles was permitted to keep a few regiments for his guard. The revenue was fixed at £1,200,000, and this sum was granted to the King for life, a grant which might have been perilous for freedom had not the taxes voted to supply the sum fallen constantly below this estimate while the current expenses of the Crown, even in time of peace, greatly exceeded it. But even for this grant a heavy price was exacted. Though the rights of the Crown over lands held, as the bulk of English estates were held, in military tenure had ceased to be of any great pecuniary value, they were indirectly a source of considerable power. The rights of wardship and of marriage above all enabled the sovereign to exercise a galling pressure on every landed proprietor in his social and domestic concerns. Under Elizabeth the right of wardship had been used to secure the education of all Catholic minors in the Protestant faith; and under James and his successor the charge of minors had been granted to Court favourites or sold in open market to the highest bidder. But the real value of these rights to the Crown lay in the political pressure which it was able to exert through them on the country gentry. A squire was naturally eager to buy the good will of a sovereign who might soon be the guardian of his daughter and the

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administrator of his estate. But the same motives which made the Crown cling to this prerogative made the Parliament anxious to do away with it. Its efforts to bring this about under James the First had been foiled by the King's stubborn resistance; but the long interruption of these rights during the troubles made their revival almost impossible at the Restoration. One of the first acts therefore of the Convention was to free the country gentry by abolishing the claims of the Crown to reliefs and wardship, purveyance, and pre-emption, and by the conversion of lands held till then in chivalry into lands held in common socage. In lieu of his rights Charles accepted a grant of £100,000 a year; a sum which it was originally purposed to raise by a tax on the lands thus exempted from feudal exactions; but which was provided for in the end with less justice by a general excise.

England and the Church.

Successful as the Convention had been in effecting a settlement of political matters it failed in bringing about a settlement of the Church. In his proclamation from Breda Charles had promised to respect liberty of conscience, and to assent to any Acts of Parliament which should be presented to him for its security. The Convention was in the main Presbyterian; but it soon became plain that the continuance of a purely Presbyterian system was impossible. "The generality of the people," wrote Sharpe, a shrewd Scotch observer, from London, "are doting after Prelacy and the Service-book." The Convention however still hoped for some modified form of Episcopalian government which would enable the bulk of the Puritan party to remain within the Church. A large part of the existing clergy indeed were Independents, and for these no compromise with Episcopacy was possible: but the greater number were moderate Presbyterians who were ready "for fear of worse" not only to submit to such a plan of Church government as Archbishop Usher had proposed, a plan in which the bishop was only the president of a diocesan board of presbyters, but to accept the Liturgy itself with

a few amendments and the omission of "superstitious practices." It was to a compromise of this kind that the King himself leant at the beginning, and a Royal declaration announced his approval of the Puritan demands, limited the authority of the bishops by the counsel of their presbyters, and promised a revision of the Book of Common Prayer. The royal declaration was read at a conference of the two parties, and with it a petition from the Independents praying for religious liberty. The King proposed to grant the prayer of the petition, not for the Independents only but for all Christians. Dexterous as the move was, it at once spread alarm. The silence of the bishops, the protest of Baxter, proved that on the point of tolerating the Catholics all were at one. In itself however the declaration satisfied the Puritan party, and one of their leaders, Dr. Reynolds, accepted a bishopric on the strength of it. But the King's disappointment at the check given to his plans showed itself in the new attitude of the government when a bill was introduced into the House of Commons by Sir Matthew Hale to turn the declaration into a law. The opposition of the Episcopalian party was secretly encouraged by the royalist section of the ministry, and the bill thrown out by a small majority. A fresh conference was promised, but in the absence of any Parliamentary action the Episcopal party boldly availed themselves of their legal rights. The ejected clergy who still remained alive entered again into their parsonages, the bishops returned to their sees, and the dissolution of the Convention-Parliament destroyed the last hope of an ecclesiastical compromise.

The Constitutional Royalists.

The tide of loyalty had in fact been rising fast during its session, and its influence was already seen in a shameful outrage wrought under the very orders of the Convention itself. The bodies of Cromwell, Bradshaw, and Ireton were torn from their graves and hung on gibbets at Tyburn, while those of Pym and Blake were cast out of Westminster Abbey into St. Margaret's churchyard. But it was only

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on the dissolution of the Convention-Parliament at the end of 1660 that the new political temper made itself vigorously felt. For the first time during twenty years half England found itself able to go to the poll. From the outset of the war all who had taken part on the royalist side had been disfranchised as "malignants," and this disfranchisement had been rigorously enforced even in the elections to the Convention. But "malignity" had now ceased to be a crime, and the voters so long deprived of all share in the suffrage, vicars, country gentlemen, farmers, with the whole body of the Catholics, rushed again to the poll. Their temper, as might be expected, was one of vengeance on the men who had held them down so long. In counties and towns alike the zeal for Church and King, the two causes for which the voters had suffered, swept all hope of moderation or compromise before it. The ruling impulse was to get utterly rid of the old representatives. The Presbyterians, dominant in the Convention, sank in the Cavalier Parliament, as that of 1661 was called, to a handful of fifty members.

The Parliament of 1661.

The new House of Commons was made up for the most part of young men, of men, that is, who had but a faint memory of the Stuart tyranny under which their childhood had been spent, but who had a keen memory of living from manhood beneath the tyranny of the Commonwealth. They had seen their fathers driven from the justice-bench, driven from the polling-booth, half-beggared and imprisoned for no other cause but their loyalty to the King. They had seen the family oaks felled and the family plate sent to the melting-pot to redeem their estates from the pitiless hands of the committee at Goldsmith's Hall. They had themselves been brought like poachers before the justices for a horse-race or a cock-fight. At every breath of a rising a squad of the New Model had quartered itself in the manor-house and a warrant from the Major-general of the district had cleared the stables. Nor was this all. The same tyranny which pressed on

their social and political life had pressed on their religious life too. The solemn petitions of the Book of Common Prayer, the words which had rung like sweet chimes in their ears from their first childhood, had been banned from every village church as accursed things. It had been only by stealth and at home that the cross could be signed on the brow of the babe whom the squire brought to be christened. Hardly by stealth had it been possible to bury their dead with the words of pathetic hope which have so often brought comfort to the ears of mourners.

The Parliament and the Church.

And now the young squires felt that their time had come. The Puritan, the Presbyterian, the Commonwealthsman, all were at their feet. Their very bearing was that of wild revolt against the Puritan past. To a staid observer, Roger Pepys, they seemed a following of "the most profane, swearing fellows that ever I heard in my life." Their whole policy appeared to be dictated by a passionate spirit of reaction. They would drive the Presbyterians from the bench and the polling-booth as the Presbyterians had driven them. They would make belief in a Commonwealth as much a sign of "malignity" as their enemies had made belief in a King. They would have no military rule: they hated indeed the very name of a standing army. They were hot royalists and they were hot churchmen. The old tyranny of the bishops was forgotten, the old jealousy of the clergy set aside in the memory of a common suffering. The oppressors of the parson had been the oppressors of the squire. The sequestrator who had driven the one from his parsonage had driven the other from his manor-house. Both had been branded with the same charge of malignity. Both had been robbed alike of the same privileges of citizenship. Both had suffered together, and the new Parliament was resolved that both should triumph together. For the first time since the Reformation the English gentry were ardent not for King only but for Church and King.

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The zeal of the Parliament at its outset therefore far outran that of Charles or his ministers. Though it confirmed the other acts of its predecessor, the Convention, it could with difficulty be brought to confirm the Act of Indemnity. The Commons pressed for the prosecution of Vane. Vane was protected alike by the spirit of the law and by the King's pledge to the Convention that, even if convicted of treason, he would not suffer him to be sent to the block. But he was now brought to trial on the charge of treason against a King "kept out of his royal authority by traitors and rebels," and his spirited defence served as an excuse for his execution. "He is too dangerous a man to let live," Charles wrote with characteristic coolness, "if we can safely put him out of the way." But the new members were yet better churchmen than loyalists. At the opening of their session they ordered every member to receive the communion, and the League and Covenant to be solemnly burnt by the common hangman in Westminster Hall. The bill which excluded the bishops from their seats in the House of Lords was repealed. The conference at the Savoy between the Episcopalians and Presbyterians broke up in anger, and the few alterations made in the Liturgy were made with a view to disgust rather than to conciliate the Puritan party.

Clarendon.

In spite of these outbursts however it would be unjust to look on the temper of the new Parliament as a mere temper of revenge. Its wish was in the main to restore the constitutional system which the civil war had violently interrupted. The royalist party, as we have seen, had no sort of sympathy with the policy of the early Stuarts. Their notions and their aims were not those of Laud and Strafford but of the group of constitutional loyalists who had followed Falkland in his break with the Long Parliament in 1642. And of that group by a singular fortune the most active and conspicuous member now filled the chief place in the counsels of the King. Edward Hyde had joined Charles the First before the outbreak of the war,

he had become his Chancellor of the Exchequer, and it was to his pen that the bulk of the royal manifestoes were attributed. He had passed with the young Prince of Wales into exile, and had remained the counsellor of Charles the Second during the long years which preceded his return. His faithfulness had been amply rewarded. He was now Earl of Clarendon and Lord Chancellor; and his influence in the royal council, which had been great from the first, became supreme when the temper of the new Parliament shattered the hopes of his Presbyterian opponents there. But his aim was simply to carry out the policy he had clung to with Falkland. He was a lawyer by breeding, and his theory of the State was a lawyer's theory. He looked on the English constitution, not as the sum of political forces which were still in process of development, but as a mass of fixed and co-ordinated institutions whose form and mutual relations had been settled in some distant past. He had opposed the Stuart tyranny because—as he held—it had broken down this constitution to the profit of the Crown. He worked with the men of the Long Parliament in what he regarded as the work of restoring it; he left them the moment that he fancied they were themselves about to break it down to the profit of the People. Years of exile had only hardened his ideas. He came back with the fixed resolve to hold the State together at the exact point where the first reforms of the Long Parliament had left it. The power and prerogative of the Crown, the authority of the Church, were to be jealously preserved, but they were to be preserved by the free will and conviction of the Parliament. It was on this harmonious co-operation of these three great institutions that Clarendon's system hung. Its importance to future times lay in his regarding Parliament and the Church, not as mere accidents or checks in the system of English government, but as essential parts of it, parts which were as needful for its healthy working as the Crown itself, and through which the power of the Crown was to

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be exercised. Wholly to realize such a conception it was necessary that the Parliament should be politically, the Church religiously, representatives of the whole nation.

The first of Clarendon's assumptions was not only a fact but a far greater fact than he imagined. Hence it came about that his assembly of the Parliament year after year, and the steady way in which he used it to do the Crown's work by setting its stamp on every great political measure, became of the highest importance in our constitutional development. The second was a fiction, for half England had passed from the grasp of the Church, but it was to make it a fact that Clarendon buckled himself to a desperate struggle with Nonconformity. It was under his guidance that the Parliament turned to the carrying out of that principle of uniformity in Church as well as in State on which the minister was resolved. The chief obstacle to such a policy lay in the Presbyterians, and the strongholds of the Presbyterians were the corporations of the boroughs. In many of the boroughs the corporation actually returned the borough members—in all they exercised a powerful influence on their election. To drive the Presbyterians therefore from municipal posts was to weaken if not to destroy the Presbyterian party in the House of Commons. It was with a view of bringing about this object that the Cavalier Parliament passed a severe Corporation Act, which required as a condition of entering on any municipal office a reception of the communion according to the rites of the Anglican Church, a renunciation of the League and Covenant, and a declaration that it was unlawful on any grounds to take up arms against the King. The attempt was only partially successful, and test and oath were taken after a while by men who regarded both simply as insults to their religious and political convictions. But if Clarendon was foiled in his effort to secure political uniformity by excluding the Presbyterian party from any connexion with the govern-

ment of the State he seemed for the time more successful in his attempt to secure a religious uniformity by their exclusion from the Church.

Act of Uniformity.

An effectual blow was dealt at the Puritans in 1662 by the renewal of the Act of Uniformity. Not only was the use of the Prayer-book and the Prayer-book only enforced in all public worship, but an unfeigned consent and assent was demanded from every minister of the Church to all which was contained in it; while for the first time since the Reformation all orders save those conferred by the hands of bishops were legally disallowed. To give a political stamp to the new measure the declaration exacted from corporations, that it was unlawful in any case to take up arms against the Crown, was exacted from the clergy, and a pledge was required that they would seek to make no change in Church or State. It was in vain that Ashley opposed the bill fiercely in the Lords, that the peers pleaded for pensions to the ejected ministers and for the exemption of schoolmasters from the necessity of subscription, and that even Clarendon, who felt that the King's word was at stake, pressed for the insertion of clauses enabling the Crown to grant dispensations from its provisions. Every suggestion of compromise was rejected by the Commons; and Charles whose aim was to procure a toleration for the Catholics by allowing the Presbyterians to feel the pressure of persecution at last assented to the bill.

St. Bartholomew's Day.

The bill passed in May, but its execution was deferred till August; and in the interval the Presbyterian party in the royal Council struggled hard to obtain from the King a suspension of its provisions by the exercise of his prerogative. Charles had promised this, but the bishops were resolute to enforce the law; and on St. Bartholomew's Day, August the 24th, the last day allowed for compliance with its requirements, nearly two thousand rectors and vicars, or about a fifth of the English clergy, were driven from their parishes as Nonconformists. No such sweeping

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alteration in the religious aspect of the Church had ever been seen before. The ecclesiastical changes of the Reformation had been brought about with little change in the clergy itself. Even the severities of the High Commission under Elizabeth ended in the expulsion of a few hundreds. If Laud had gone zealously to work in emptying Puritan pulpits his zeal had been to a great extent foiled by the restrictions of the law and by the growth of Puritan sentiment in the clergy as a whole. A far wider change had been brought about in the expulsion of royalist clergy from their benefices during the Civil War; but the change had been gradual, and had been at least ostensibly wrought for the most part on political or moral rather than on religious grounds. The parsons expelled were expelled as "malignants," or as unfitted for their office by idleness or vice or inability to preach. But the change wrought by St. Bartholomew's Day was a distinctly religious change, and it was a change which in its suddenness and completeness stood utterly alone. The rectors and vicars who were driven out were the most learned and the most active of their order. The bulk of the great livings throughout the country were in their hands. They stood at the head of the London clergy, as the London clergy stood in general repute at the head of their class throughout England. They occupied the higher posts at the two Universities. No English divine save Jeremy Taylor rivalled Howe as a preacher. No parson was so renowned a controversialist or so indefatigable a parish priest as Baxter. And behind these men stood a fifth of the whole body of the clergy, men whose zeal and labour had diffused throughout the country a greater appearance of piety and religion than it had ever displayed before.

Its religious results.

But the expulsion of these men was far more to the Church of England than the loss of their individual services. It was the definite expulsion of a great party which from the time of the Reformation had played the most active

and popular part in the life of the Church. It was the close of an effort which had been going on ever since Elizabeth's accession to bring the English Communion into closer relations with the Reformed Communions of the Continent and into greater harmony with the religious instincts of the nation at large. The Church of England stood from that moment isolated and alone among all the Churches of the Christian world. The Reformation had severed it irretrievably from those which still clung to the obedience of the Papacy. By its rejection of all but episcopal orders the Act of Uniformity severed it as irretrievably from the general body of the Protestant Churches whether Lutheran or Reformed. And while thus cut off from all healthy religious communion with the world without it sank into immobility within. With the expulsion of the Puritan clergy all change, all efforts after reform, all national development, suddenly stopped. From that time to this the Episcopal Church has been unable to meet the varying spiritual needs of its adherents by any modifications of its government or its worship. It stands alone among all the religious bodies of Western Christendom in its failure through two hundred years to devise a single new service of prayer or of praise.

Its political results.

But if the issues of St. Bartholomew's Day have been harmful to the spiritual life of the English Church they have been in the highest degree advantageous to the cause of religious liberty. At the Restoration religious freedom seemed again to have been lost. Only the Independents and a few despised sects, such as the Quakers, upheld the right of every man to worship God according to the bidding of his own conscience. The bulk of the Puritan Party, with the Presbyterians at its head, was at one with its opponents in desiring a uniformity of worship, if not of belief, throughout the land. Had the two great parties within the Church held together their weight would have been almost irresistible. Fortunately the great severance of St. Bartholomew's Day drove out the Presbyterians

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from the Church to which they clung, and forced them into a general union with sects which they had hated till then almost as bitterly as the bishops themselves. A common persecution soon blended the Nonconformists into one. Persecution broke down before the numbers, the wealth, and the political weight of the new sectarians; and the Church for the first time in its history found itself confronted with an organized body of Dissenters without its pale. The impossibility of crushing such a body as this wrested from English statesmen the first legal recognition of freedom of worship in the Toleration Act; their rapid growth in later times has by degrees stripped the Church of almost all the exclusive privileges which it enjoyed as a religious body, and now threatens what remains of its official connection with the state. With these remoter consequences however we are not as yet concerned. It is enough to note here that with the Act of Uniformity and the expulsion of the Puritan clergy a new element in our religious and political history, the element of Dissent, the influence of the Nonconformist churches, comes first into play.

Charles and Clarendon.

The sudden outbreak and violence of the persecution, the breaking up of conventicles, the imprisonment of those who were found worshipping in them, turned the disappointment of the Presbyterians into despair. Many were for retiring to Holland, others proposed a general flight to New England and the American colonies. Among the Baptists and Independents there was vague talk of an appeal to arms. So threatening indeed did the attitude of the sectaries become that Clarendon was anxious to provide himself with men and money and above all with foreign aid for such a struggle, should it come. Different indeed as were the aims of the King and his Chancellor the course of events drew them inevitably together. If Charles desired the friendship of France as a support in any possible struggle with the Parliament Clarendon desired it as a support in the possible struggle with the Nonconformists. The first

step in this French policy had been the marriage with Catharine of Braganza; the second was the surrender of Dunkirk. The maintenance of the garrison at Dunkirk was a heavy drag upon the royal treasury, and a proposal for its sale to Spain, which was made by Lord Sandwich in council, was seized by Charles and Clarendon as a means of opening a bargain with France. To France the profit was immense. Not only was a port gained in the Channel which served during the next hundred years as a haunt for privateers in every war between the two powers, but the withdrawal of the English garrison at the close of 1662 from a port which necessarily drew England into every contest between France and Spain freed the hands of Lewis for the stroke he was patiently planning against the Low Countries. Lewis however proved a shrewd bargainer, and not a half of the sum originally demanded as its price found its way into the royal treasury. But the money was accepted as a pledge of the close connexion which was to bind the two crowns together. Charles declared the cession to be "one of the greatest proofs he could give of his friendship for the French King," and the Duke of York pressed the bargain with assurances that his strongest desire, like that of his brother, was "to unite our interests with those of France." Clarendon was as desirous of such a union as his master. In his eyes the friendship of France, the money, the force placed in his hands by the return of the garrison of Dunkirk to England, were so many safeguards against the outbreak of rebellion which his policy had provoked.

Ashley Cooper.

But he had reckoned without Charles, and the time was come when the King was to show how widely his temper and aim differed from those of his Chancellor. Charles had no taste for civil war, nor had he the slightest wish to risk his throne in securing the supremacy of the Church. His aim was to use the strife between the two great bodies of Protestant religionists so as to secure toleration for the Catholics and revive at the same time his prerogative of

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dispensing with the execution of laws. At the close of 1662 therefore he suddenly broke from the policy of Clarendon and laid his plans for toleration before the Presbyterian party who were struggling against the Chancellor in the royal council. Of that party Ashley Cooper, Lord Ashley, was now in influence, though not in rank, the chief. Every step in his career had brought out the boldness, the self-reliance, the versatility and readiness of resource which distinguished his character. In mere boyhood he had saved his estate from the greed of his guardians by boldly appealing in person for protection to Noy, who was then attorney-general. As an undergraduate at Oxford he organized a rebellion of the freshmen against the oppressive customs which were enforced by the senior men of his college, and succeeded in abolishing them. At eighteen he was a member of the Short Parliament. On the outbreak of the Civil War he took part with the King; but in the midst of the royal successes he foresaw the ruin of the royal cause, passed to the Parliament, attached himself to the fortunes of Cromwell, and became member of the Council of State. A temporary disgrace during the last years of the Protectorate only quickened him to a restless hatred which did much to bring about its fall. His bitter invectives against the dead Protector, his intrigues with Monk, and the active part which he took in the King's recall, were rewarded at the Restoration with a peerage and with promotion to a foremost share in the royal councils.

Ashley was then a man of forty, and under the Commonwealth he had been famous in Dryden's contemptuous phrase as "the loudest bagpipe of the squeaking train;" but he was no sooner a minister of Charles than he flung himself into the debauchery of the Court with an ardour which surprised even his master. "You are the wickedest dog in England!" laughed the King at some unscrupulous jest of his counsellor's. "Of a subject, Sir, I believe I am!" was the unabashed reply. But the debauchery of

Ashley was simply a mask. He was in fact temperate by nature and habit, and his ill-health rendered any great excess impossible. Men soon found that the courtier who lounged in Lady Castlemaine's boudoir, or drank and jested with Sedley and Buckingham, was a diligent and able man of business. "He is a man," says the puzzled Pepys, three years after the Restoration, "of great business and yet of pleasure and dissipation too." His rivals were as envious of the ease and mastery with which he dealt with questions of finance as of the "nimble wit" which won the favour of the King. Even in later years his industry earned the grudging praise of his enemies. Dryden owned that as Chancellor he was "swift to despatch and easy of access," and wondered at the fevered activity which "refused his age the needful hours of rest." His activity indeed was the more wonderful that his health was utterly broken. An accident in early days left behind it an abiding weakness whose traces were seen in the furrows which seamed his long pale face, in the feebleness of his health, and the nervous tremor which shook his puny frame. The "pigmy body" was "fretted to decay" by the "fiery soul" within it. But pain and weakness brought with them no sourness of spirit. Ashley was attacked more unscrupulously than any statesman save Walpole; but Burnet, who did not love him, owns that he was never bitter or angry in speaking of his assailants. Even the wit with which he crushed them was commonly good-humoured. "When will you have done preaching?" a bishop murmured testily, as he was speaking in the House of Peers. "When I am a bishop, my Lord!" was the laughing reply.

Ashley's Policy.

As a statesman Ashley not only stood high among his contemporaries from his wonderful readiness and industry, but he stood far above them in his scorn of personal profit. Even Dryden, while raking together every fault in his character, owns that his hands were clean. As a political leader his position was to modern eyes odd enough. In

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religion he was at most a Deist, with some fanciful notions "that after death our souls lived in stars," and his life was that of a debauchee. But Deist and debauchee as he was he remained the representative of the Presbyterian and Nonconformist party in the Royal Council. He was the steady and vehement advocate of toleration, but his advocacy was based on purely political grounds. He saw that persecution would fail to bring back the Dissenters to the Church, and that the effort to recall them only left the country disunited. He saw too that such a disunion exposed English liberty to invasion from the Crown, while it robbed England herself of all influence in Europe at a time when her influence alone could effectually check the ambition of France. The one means of uniting Churchmen and Dissidents was by a policy of toleration, but in the temper of England after the Restoration he saw no hope of obtaining toleration save from the King. Wit, debauchery, rapidity in the despatch of business, were all therefore used as a means to gain influence over the King, and to secure him as a friend in the struggle which Ashley carried on against the intolerance of Clarendon.

The first Declaration of Indulgence.

Charles, as we have seen, had his own game to play, and his own reasons for protecting Ashley during his vehement struggle against the Test and Corporation Act, the Act of Uniformity, and the persecution of the Dissidents. But the struggle had been fruitless, and the only chance—as it seemed to Ashley—of securing toleration was to receive it on the King's own terms. It was with the assent therefore of the Presbyterian party in the Council that Charles issued in December a royal proclamation which expressed the King's resolve to exempt from the penalties of the Acts which had been passed "those who living peaceably do not conform themselves thereunto through scruple and tenderness of misguided conscience, but modestly and without scandal perform their devotions in their own way." The desire for toleration had in fact not only overcome their dread of Catholicism, but even blinded them to the

political dangers of a revival of the dispensing power. The indulgence applied equally to Catholics as to Protestants; it was in itself a bold assertion of the royal prerogative of suspending the execution of the law. The Presbyterian statesmen indeed aimed at giving the dispensing power a legal basis. A bill introduced by Lords Ashley and Roberts in the opening of 1663, in redemption of a pledge contained in the declaration itself, gave Charles the power to dispense not only with the provisions of the Act of Uniformity but with the penalties provided by all laws which enforced religious conformity or which imposed religious tests. But the policy of Charles as of Ashley broke instantly down before the good sense as well as the religious passion of the people at large. If the Presbyterian leaders in the council had stooped to accept the aid of the declaration, the bulk of the Dissidents had no mind to have their grievances used as a means of procuring by a side wind toleration for Roman Catholics, or of building up again that dispensing power which the civil wars had thrown down. The Churchmen on the other hand with the bishops at their head were resolute in opposition. Ever since the issue of the Declaration of Indulgence the hatred felt by the Churchmen for the Dissidents had been embittered by suspicions of a secret league between the Dissidents and the Catholics in which the King was taking part. The Houses therefore struck simultaneously at both their opponents. They forced Charles by an address to withdraw his pledge of toleration. They then extorted from him a proclamation for the banishment of all Catholic priests, and followed this up by a Conventicle Act, which punished with fine, imprisonment, and transportation on a third offence all persons who met in greater number than five for any religious worship save that of the Common Prayer.

Clarendon's triumph.

What added to the sting of this defeat was the open opposition which Clarendon had offered to his master's scheme in Parliament. From that moment Charles resolved

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on his minister's ruin. But Clarendon's position was too strong to be easily shaken. Hated by the Catholics and the Dissenters, opposed in the Council itself by Ashley and the Presbyterian leaders, opposed in the Court by the King's mistress, Lady Castlemaine, as well as by the supple and adroit Henry Bennet, a creature of the King's who began to play a foremost part in politics, Clarendon was still strong in his long and intimate connexion with the King's affairs, his alliance with the royal house through the marriage of his daughter, Anne Hyde, with the Duke of York, in his untiring industry, his wide capacity for business, above all in the support of the Church and the confidence of the royalist and orthodox House of Commons. To the Commons and the Church he was only bound the closer by the hatred of Catholics and Nonconformists or by the futile attempts at impeachment which were made by the Catholic Earl of Bristol in the summer of 1663. The "Declaration" indeed had strengthened Clarendon's position. It had identified his policy of persecution with the maintenance of constitutional liberty, and had thrown on Ashley and his opponents the odium of an attempt to set up again the dispensing power and of betraying, as it was thought, the interests of Protestantism into the hands of Rome. Never in fact had Clarendon's power seemed stronger than in 1664; and the only result of the attempt to shake his system of intolerance was an increase of persecution. Of the sufferings of the expelled clergy one of their number, Richard Baxter, has given us an account. "Many hundreds of them with their wives and children had neither house nor bread. . . . Their congregations had enough to do, besides a small maintenance, to help them out of prisons or to maintain them there. Though they were as frugal as possible they could hardly live; some lived on little more than brown bread and water, many had but eight or ten pounds a year to maintain a family, so that a piece of flesh has not come to one of their tables in

six weeks' time; their allowance could scarce afford them bread and cheese. One went to plow six days and preached on the Lord's Day. Another was forced to cut tobacco for a livelihood." But poverty was the least of their sufferings. They were jeered at by the players. They were hooted through the streets by the mob. "Many of the ministers being afraid to lay down their ministry after they had been ordained to it, preached to such as would hear them in fields and private houses, till they were apprehended and cast into gaols, where many of them perished." They were excommunicated in the Bishop's Court or fined for nonattendance at church; and a crowd of informers grew up who made a trade of detecting the meetings they held at midnight. Alleyn, the author of the well-known "Alarm to the Unconverted," died at thirty-six from the sufferings he endured in Taunton Gaol. Vavasour Powell, the apostle of Wales, spent the eleven years which followed the Restoration in prisons at Shrewsbury, Southsea, and Cardiff, till he perished in the Fleet.

England and the Dutch.

The success however of this experiment in the repression of religious opinion rested mainly on the absence of any disturbing influences from without; and in the midst of his triumph over his opponents at home Clarendon was watching anxiously the growth of a quarrel which threatened war with the Dutch. The old commercial jealousy between the two rival merchant nations, which had been lulled in 1662 by a formal treaty of peace, but which still lived on in petty squabbles at sea, was embittered by the cession of Bombay—a port which gave England an entry into the profitable trade with India—as well as by the establishment of a West Indian Company in London which opened a traffic with the Gold Coast of Africa, and brought back from Guinea the gold from which our first "guineas" were struck. In both countries there was a general irritation which vented itself in cries for war, and in the session of 1664 the English Parliament presented

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an address to the Crown praying for the exaction of redress for wrongs done by the Dutch to English merchants. But the squabble was of long standing, and there was nothing to threaten any immediate strife. Charles himself indeed shrank from wars which he foresaw would leave him at the mercy of his Parliament; and Clarendon with Ormond, the bishops, and the whole Church party, were conscious that the maintenance of peace was needful for their system of religious repression. The quarrel therefore would have dragged on in endless recriminations had not the restless hatred of the Chancellor's opponents seen in it a means of bringing about the end in which they had as yet been foiled. Bennet and the Court, Ashley and the Presbyterian party in the Council, Bristol and the Catholics, foresaw that the pressure of such a war, the burdens it would bring with it, and the supplies for which he would be driven to ask, would soon ruin the Chancellor's popularity with the Commons. Stripped of their support, it was easy to bring about his fall and clear the stage for fresh efforts after a religious toleration. The popular temper made their task of forcing on a war an easy one. The King was won over, partly by playing on his old resentment at the insults he had suffered from Holland during his exile, partly by his hope that the suffering which war would bring on Holland would end in the overthrow of the aristocratic republicans who had governed the United Provinces ever since the fall of the House of Orange and in the restoration of his young nephew, William of Orange, to the old influence of his family over the State. Such a restoration would not only repay the debt of gratitude which the royalist cause owed to the efforts of William's father in its support, but would remove the dread which the English government never ceased to feel of the encouragement which the Dissidents at home derived from the mere existence close by of a presbyterian and republican government in Holland. Against the combined pressure of the King, the people, and his enemies in the cabinet and the court, Clarendon

was unable to contend. Attacks on the Dutch settlements on the Gold Coast and the American coast made war inevitable; a fleet was manned; and at the close of 1664 the Parliament in a fit of unwonted enthusiasm voted two millions and a half for the coming struggle.

The Dutch War.

The war at sea which followed was a war of giants. No such mighty fleets have ever disputed the sovereignty of the seas, nor have any naval battles equalled the encounters of the two nations in dogged and obstinate fighting. In the spring of 1665 the two fleets, each a hundred ships strong, mustered in the channel, the Dutch under Opdam, the English under the Duke of York. Their first battle off Lowestoft, obstinate as all the engagements between the two nations, ended in a victory for the English, a victory due chiefly to the superiority of their guns and to a shot which blew up the flag-ship of the Dutch Admiral in the midst of the engagement. But the thought of triumph was soon forgotten in a terrible calamity which now fell on London. In six months a hundred thousand Londoners died of the Plague which broke out in May in the crowded streets of the capital, and which drove the Parliament from London to assemble in October at Oxford. To the dismay caused by the Plague was added the growing irritation at the increasing pressure of the war and a sense of the grave dangers into which the struggle with Holland was plunging the country both at home and abroad. The enormous grant which had been made at the outset for three years was already spent and a fresh supply had to be granted. But hard and costly as the Dutch war had proved a far graver and costlier struggle seemed opening in its train. The war was a serious stumbling-block in the way of the French projects. Holland on the strength of old treaties, England on the strength of her new friendship, alike called on Lewis for aid; but to give aid to either was to run the risk of throwing the other on the aid of the House of Austria, and of building up the league which could alone check France in its

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designs upon Spain. Only peace could keep the European states disunited, and it was on their disunion that Lewis counted for success in his design of seizing Flanders, a design which was now all but ripe for execution. At the outset of the war therefore he offered his mediation, and suggested the terms of a compromise. But his attempt was fruitless, and the defeat off Lowestoft forced him to more effective action. He declared himself forced to give aid to the Dutch; though he cautiously restricted his help to the promise of a naval reinforcement. But the chief work of his negotiators was to prevent any extension of the struggle. Sweden and Brandenburg, from both of which powers Charles counted on support, were held in check by the intervention of France; and the Bishop of Münster, whom an English subsidy had roused to an attack on his Dutch neighbours, was forced by the influence of Lewis to withdraw his troops. Sir William Temple, the English ambassador at Brussels, strove to enlist Spain on the side of England by promising to bring about a treaty between that country and Portugal which would free its hands for an attack on Lewis, and so anticipate his plans for an attack under more favourable circumstances on herself. But Lewis knew how to play on the Catholic bigotry of Spain, and the English offers were set aside.

England and France.

Lewis thus succeeded in isolating England and in narrowing the war within the limits of a struggle at sea, a struggle in which the two great sea-powers could only weaken one another to the profit of his own powerful navy. But his intervention was far from scaring England into peace. The old hatred of France had quickened the English people to an early perception of the dangers which were to spring from French ambition; and as early as 1661 the London mob backed the Spanish ambassador in a street squabble for precedence with the ambassador of France. "We do all naturally love the Spanish," Pepys comments on this at the time, "and hate the French." The marriage of Catharine, the sale of Dunkirk, were taken as signs of

the growth of a French influence over English policy, and the jealousy and suspicion they had aroused were seen in the reception with which the Parliament met the announcement of Lewis's hostility. No sooner had the words fallen from Charles's lips than "there was a great noise in the Parliament," writes the French statesman Louvois, "to show the joy of the two Houses at the prospect of a fight with us." But even the warlike temper of the Parliament could not blind it to the new weight which was given to the struggle by this intervention of France. Above all it woke men to the dangers at home. The policy of Clarendon had broken England into two nations. Whatever might be the attitude of Monk or Ashley in the royal closet the sympathies of the Nonconformists as a whole could not fail to be opposed to a war with the Dutch; and as Charles was striving with some show of success to rouse the Orange party in the States to active opposition against the dominant republicans, so the Dutch statesmen summoned the banished regicides to Holland, and dreamed of a landing in England which would bring about a general rising of the Dissidents against Charles. The less scrupulous diplomacy of Lewis availed itself of every element of opposition, called Algernon Sidney to Paris and supplied him with money as a possible means of rousing the English republicans, while it corresponded with the Presbyterians in Scotland and the hardly less bitter Catholics of Ireland.

The Religious Persecution.

The dread of internal revolt was quickened by the new attitude of resistance taken by the Nonconformists. When the clergy fled from London at the appearance of the Plague, their pulpits were boldly occupied in open defiance of the law by the ministers who had been ejected from them. The terror and hatred roused by this revival of a foe that seemed to have been crushed was seen in the Five Mile Act, which completed in 1665 the code of persecution. By its provisions every clergyman who had been driven out by the Act of Uniformity was called on to swear that he held it unlawful under any pretext to take up arms

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against the King and that he would at no time "endeavour any alteration of government in Church or State." In case of refusal he was forbidden to go within five miles of any borough or of any place where he had been wont to minister. As the main body of the Nonconformists belonged to the city and trading classes, the effect of this measure was to rob them of any religious teaching at all. But the tide of religious intolerance was now slowly ebbing and, bigoted as the House was, a motion to impose the oath of the Five Mile Act on every person in the nation was rejected in the same session by a majority of six. The sufferings of the Nonconformists indeed could hardly fail to tell on the sympathies of the people. The thirst for revenge which had been roused by the tyranny of the Presbyterians in their hour of triumph was satisfied by their humiliation in their hour of defeat. The sight of pious and learned clergymen driven from their homes and their flocks, of religious meetings broken up by the constables, of preachers set side by side with thieves and outcasts in the dock, of gaols crammed with honest enthusiasts whose piety was their only crime, pleaded more eloquently for toleration than all the reasoning in the world.

Milton.

We have a clue to the extent of the persecution from what we know to have been its effect on a single sect. The Quakers had excited alarm by their extravagances of manner as well as by their refusal to bear arms or to take oaths, and a special Act was passed for their repression. They were one of the smallest of the Nonconformists bodies, but more than four thousand were soon in prison, and five hundred of these were imprisoned in London alone. The King's Declaration of Indulgence twelve years later set free twelve hundred Quakers who had found their way to the gaols. For not only had persecution failed to kill religious liberty, but the very Puritanism which the Cavalier Parliament believed itself to have trodden under foot was at this moment proving the noble life it had drawn from suffering

and defeat. It was at this moment that Milton produced the "Paradise Lost." During the Civil War he had been engaged in strife with presbyterians and with royalists, pleading for civil and religious freedom, for freedom of social life, and freedom of the press. At a later time he became Latin secretary to the Protector in spite of a blindness which had been brought on by the intensity of his study. The Restoration found him of all living men the most hateful to the royalists, for it was his "Defence of the English People" which had justified throughout Europe the execution of the King. Parliament ordered his book to be burnt by the common hangman; he was for a time imprisoned; and even when released he had to live amidst threats of assassination from fanatical Cavaliers. To the ruin of his cause were added personal misfortunes in the bankruptcy of the scrivener who held the bulk of his property, and in the Fire of London which deprived him of much of what was left. As age drew on he found himself reduced to comparative poverty and driven to sell his library for subsistence. Even among the sectaries who shared his political opinions Milton stood in religious opinion alone, for he had gradually severed himself from every accepted form of faith, had embraced Arianism, and had ceased to attend at any place of worship.

His Life.

Nor was his home a happy one. The grace and geniality of his youth disappeared in the drudgery of a schoolmaster's life and amongst the invectives of controversy. In age his temper became stern and exacting. His daughters, who were forced to read to their blind father in languages which they could not understand, revolted against their bondage. But solitude and misfortune only brought into bolder relief Milton's inner greatness. There was a grand simplicity in the life of his later years. He listened every morning to a chapter of the Hebrew Bible, and after musing in silence for a while pursued his studies till mid-day. Then he took exercise for an hour, played for another hour on

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the organ or viol, and renewed his studies. The evening was spent in converse with visitors and friends. For lonely and unpopular as Milton was, there was one thing about him which made his house in Bunhill Fields a place of pilgrimage to the wits of the Restoration. He was the last of the Elizabethans. He had possibly seen Shakspere, as on his visits to London after his retirement to Stratford the playwright passed along Bread Street to his wit combats at the Mermaid. He had been the contemporary of Webster and Massinger, of Herrick and Crashaw. His "Comus" and "Arcades" had rivalled the masques of Ben Jonson. It was with a reverence drawn from thoughts like these that men looked on the blind poet as he sate, clad in black, in his chamber hung with rusty green tapestry, his fair brown hair falling as of old over a calm serene face that still retained much of its youthful beauty, his cheeks delicately coloured, his clear grey eyes showing no trace of their blindness. But famous whether for good or ill as his prose writings had made him, during fifteen years only a few sonnets had broken his silence as a singer. It was now in his blindness and old age, with the cause he loved trodden under foot by men as vile as the rabble in "Comus," that the genius of Milton took refuge in the great poem on which through years of silence his imagination had been brooding.

The "Paradise Lost."

On his return from his travels in Italy Milton spoke of himself as musing on "a work not to be raised from the heat of youth or the vapours of wine, like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amourist or the trencher fury of a rhyming parasite, nor to be obtained by the invocation of Dame Memory and her Siren daughters, but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out His Seraphim with the hallowed fire of His altar to touch and purify the lips of whom He pleases." His lips were touched at last. In the quiet retreat of his home in Bunhill Fields he mused during these years of persecution and loneliness

on the "Paradise Lost." The poem was published in 1667, seven years after the Restoration, and four years later appeared the "Paradise Regained" and "Samson Agonistes," in the severe grandeur of whose verse we see the poet himself "fallen," like Samson, "on evil days and evil tongues, with darkness and with danger compassed round." But great as the two last works were their greatness was eclipsed by that of their predecessor. The whole genius of Milton expressed itself in the "Paradise Lost." The romance, the gorgeous fancy, the daring imagination which he shared with the Elizabethan poets, the large but ordered beauty which he had drunk in from the literature of Greece and Rome, the sublimity of conception, the loftiness of phrase which he owed to the Bible, blended in this story "of man's first disobedience, and the fruit of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste brought death into the world and all our woe." It is only when we review the strangely mingled elements which make up the poem that we realize the genius which fused them into such a perfect whole. The meagre outline of the Hebrew legend is lost in the splendour and music of Milton's verse. The stern idealism of Geneva is clothed in the gorgeous robes of the Renascence. If we miss something of the free play of Spenser's fancy, and yet more of the imaginative delight in their own creations which gives so exquisite a life to the poetry of the early dramatists, we find in place of these the noblest example which our literature affords of the majesty of classic form.

The Epic of Puritanism.

But it is not with the literary value of the "Paradise Lost" that we are here concerned. Its historic importance lies in this, that it is the Epic of Puritanism. Its scheme is the problem with which the Puritan wrestled in hours of gloom and darkness—the problem of sin and redemption, of the world-wide struggle of evil against good. The intense moral concentration of the Puritan had given an almost bodily shape to spiritual abstractions before Milton gave life and being to the forms of Sin and Death. It was the Puritan tendency to mass into one vast "body

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of sin" the various forms of human evil, and by the very force of a passionate hatred to exaggerate their magnitude and their power, to which we owe the conception of Milton's Satan. The greatness of the Puritan aim in the long and wavering struggle for justice and law and a higher good, the grandeur of character which the contest developed, the colossal forms of good and evil which moved over its stage, the debates and conspiracies and battles which had been men's life for twenty years, the mighty eloquence and the mightier ambition which the war had roused into being—all left their mark on the "Paradise Lost." Whatever was highest and best in the Puritan temper spoke in the nobleness and elevation of the poem, in its purity of tone, in its loftiness of conception, in its ordered and equable realization of a great purpose. Even in his boldest flights Milton is calm and master of himself. His touch is always sure. Whether he passes from Heaven to Hell or from the council hall of Satan to the sweet conference of Adam and Eve his tread is steady and unfaltering.

Its Defects.

But if the poem expresses the higher qualities of the Puritan temper it expresses no less exactly its defects. Throughout it we feel almost painfully a want of the finer and subtler sympathies, of a large and genial humanity, of a sense of spiritual mystery. Dealing as Milton does with subjects the most awful and mysterious that poet ever chose, he is never troubled by the obstinate questionings of invisible things which haunted the imagination of Shakspere. We look in vain for any Æschylean background of the vast unknown. "Man's disobedience" and the scheme for man's redemption are laid down as clearly and with just as little mystery as in a Puritan discourse. On topics such as these, even God the Father (to borrow Pope's sneer) "turns a school divine." As in his earlier poems he had ordered and arranged nature, so in the "Paradise Lost" Milton orders and arranges Heaven and Hell. His mightiest figures, Angel or Archangel, Satan or

Belial, stand out colossal but distinct. There is just as little of the wide sympathy with all that is human which is so lovable in Chaucer and Shakspere. On the contrary the Puritan individuality is nowhere so overpowering as in Milton. He leaves the stamp of himself deeply graven on all he creates. We hear his voice in every line of his poem. The cold, severe conception of moral virtue which reigns throughout it, the intellectual way in which he paints and regards beauty (for the beauty of Eve is a beauty which no mortal man may love) are Milton's own. We feel his inmost temper in the stoical self-repression which gives its dignity to his figures. Adam utters no cry of agony when he is driven from Paradise. Satan suffers in a defiant silence. It is to this intense self-concentration that we must attribute the strange deficiency of humour which the poet shared with the Puritans generally, and which here and there breaks the sublimity of the poem with strange slips into the grotesque. But it is above all to this Puritan deficiency in human sympathy that we must attribute Milton's wonderful want of dramatic genius. Of the power which creates a thousand different characters, which endows each with its appropriate act and word, which loses itself in its own creations, no great poet ever had less.

The Naval War.

While Milton was busy with his verse events were moving fast in favour of the cause which he saw trodden under foot. Defeat had only spurred the Dutch to fresh efforts. Their best seaman, De Ruyter, had reorganized their fleet, and appeared off the North Foreland in May, 1666, with eighty-eight vessels, stronger and better armed than those of Opdam. The English fleet was almost as strong; but a squadron had been detached under Prince Rupert to meet a French force reported to be at Belleisle, and it was with but sixty ships that the new admiral, Monk, Duke of Albemarle, fell in with De Ruyter's armament. There was no thought however of retreat, and a fight at once began, the longest and most stubborn

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that the seas have ever seen. The battle had raged for two whole days, and Monk, left with only sixteen ships uninjured, saw himself on the brink of ruin, when on the morning of the third he was saved by the arrival of Rupert. Though still greatly inferior in force, the dogged admiral renewed the fight on the fourth day as the Dutch drew off to their own coast, but the combat again ended in De Ruyter's favour and the English took refuge in the Thames. Their fleet was indeed ruined; twenty ships had been taken or sunk and a far larger number disabled; but the losses of the enemy had been hardly less. What the Dutch had discovered, owned De Witt, was, "that English sailors might be killed and English ships burned, but that there was no conquering Englishmen." At the close of July in fact the two fleets, again refitted, met anew off the North Foreland; and a second fight, as hard fought as that which had gone before, ended in an English victory. Twenty Dutch sail had struck or sunk, seven thousand Dutch seamen had been slain, while the English loss was comparatively small. The victorious fleet sailed along the rich coast of Holland, burning merchantmen and plundering its undefended towns. But Holland was as unconquerable as England herself. In a short time the Dutch fleet was again refitted and at sea, and Lewis, whose aid had hitherto been only in words, thought it time to act. The French fleet joined the Dutch, and the English found themselves too inferior in force to venture on a fresh battle for the command of the Channel.

Parliament and the War.

It was at this moment of national disappointment, with the fruit of great efforts snatched away and the sea lost, that a fresh calamity at home was added to the sufferings of the war. In the night of the second of September a fire broke out in the heart of London which raged for four days and reduced the city to ashes from the Tower to the Temple. Thirteen hundred houses and ninety churches were destroyed. The loss of merchandize and property was beyond count. Again the Parliament with stubborn

pride voted a subsidy of nearly two millions to refit the fleet. But the money came in slowly. The treasury was so utterly drained that it was agreed to fit out no large ships for the coming year. The ministers indeed were already seeking to conclude a peace through the mediation of France. It was not the public distress alone which drove Clarendon to peace negotiations: his own fears and those of the King had been alike fulfilled as the war went on. The country squires were disgusted at the obstinacy and cost of the struggle, and they visited their disgust on Clarendon as its supposed author. He had lost the support of the Houses, and the admission of fresh opponents into the royal council spoke of the secret enmity of the king. But Charles too had his reasons for desiring peace. He had a sleepless distrust of Parliaments, and his distrust was already justified. The "Cavalier" Parliament had met in a passion of loyalty. It had pressed for the death of the regicides. It had hardly been hindered from throwing all England into confusion by refusing its assent to the Amnesty Bill. It had ordered the League and Covenant, as well as the act deposing Charles Stuart, to be burned by the common hangman. It had declared the taking up arms against the King on any pretext to be treason, and had turned its declaration into a test to be exacted from every parson and every alderman. And yet this loyal parliament had faced and checked the Crown as boldly and pertinaciously as the Long Parliament itself. It had carried out its own ecclesiastical policy in the teeth of the known wishes of the King. It had humiliated him by forcing him to cancel his public declaration in favour of the Nonconformists. It gave counsel in foreign affairs, and met the King's leanings towards Lewis by expressions of its will for a contest with France. It voted large subsidies indeed, but at this juncture it inserted into the Subsidy Bill a clause which appointed a Parliamentary commission with powers to examine into the royal expenditure, and to question royal officers upon oath.

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To Clarendon such a demand seemed as great an usurpation on the rights of the Crown as any measure of the Long Parliament, and he advised a dissolution. But the advice was rejected, for there was no hope that fresh elections could bring together a more royalist House of Commons than that of 1661. The attitude of the Houses showed in fact that the hottest royalists had learned, whether they would or no, the lesson of the Civil War. Whatever might in other ways be the temper of the Commons who assembled at Westminster, it was certain that the great constitutional revolution which was slowly removing the control of affairs from the hands of the Crown into those of the Parliament would go just as steadily on. But if Charles refused to dissolve the Parliament he longed to free himself from its power; and the mediation of France enabled a peace congress to assemble at Breda in May 1667. To Holland, eager to free its hands so as to deal with the French invasion of the Netherlands, an invasion which was now felt to be impending, peace was yet more important than to England; and a stroke of singular vigour placed peace within her grasp. Aware of the exhaustion of the English treasury and of the miserable state of the English navy, the persevering De Witt suddenly ordered the Dutch fleet, sixty vessels strong, to sail in June to the Thames. England was taken utterly by surprise. Neither ships nor forts were manned when the Hollanders appeared at the Nore. Pushing their light vessels without show of opposition up the Thames to Gravesend they forced the boom which protected the Medway, burned three men of war which lay anchored in the river, and withdrew only to sail proudly along the coast, the masters of the Channel.

The Dutch in the Medway.

Fall of Clarendon.

The thunder of the Dutch guns in the Medway and the Thames woke England to a bitter sense of its degradation. The dream of loyalty was roughly broken. "Everybody now-a-days," Pepys tells us, "reflect upon Oliver and commend him: what brave things he did, and made all the

neighbour princes fear him." But Oliver's successor was coolly watching this shame and discontent of his people with the one aim of turning it to his own advantage. To Charles the Second the degradation of England was only a move in the political game which he was playing, a game played with so consummate a secrecy and skill that it not only deceived close observers of his own day but still misleads historians in ours. The blow at once brought about the peace he desired. Each of the combatants retained what it had won, save that Holland gained the isle of Polaroon on the Bombay coast, and England the settlement of New Amsterdam on the Hudson, which was soon to be better known as her colony of New York. A result still more to the King's taste was the ruin of Clarendon. Clarendon had had no part in the reduction of the navy which had proved so fatal to English renown, but the public resentment fell on him alone. The Parliament, enraged by his counsel for its dissolution, saw in his call for forces to defend the coast an attempt to re-establish the one thing they hated most, a standing army. Charles could at last free himself from the minister who had held him in check so long. In August 1667 the Chancellor was dismissed from office, and driven by the express command of the King to take refuge in France.

CHAPTER II.

THE POPISH PLOT, 1667—1683.

The Cabal Ministry.

THE fall of Clarendon marks a new epoch in the history of the Restoration. By the exile of the Chancellor, the death of Lord Southampton, which had preceded, and the retirement of Ormond and Nicholas which followed it, the constitutional loyalists who had hitherto shaped the policy of the government disappeared from the royal council. The union between King, Church, and Parliament, on which their system had been based, was roughly dissolved. The House of Commons, which had been elected in a passion of loyalty only six years before found itself thrown into a position of antagonism to the Crown. The Church saw the most formidable opponent of its supremacy in the King.

For the first time since his accession Charles came boldly forward to the front of public affairs. He had freed himself, as he believed, from the domination of the constitutional loyalists and of the ministers who represented them. The new ministry was mainly made up of that section of the original ministry of 1660 which then represented the Presbyterians, and which under Ashley's guidance had bent to purchase toleration even at the cost of increasing the prerogatives of the Crown.

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Ashley himself remained Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Duke of Buckingham, whose marriage with the daughter of Lord Fairfax allied him with the Presbyterians, and who carried on political relations even with the Independents, held a leading position in the new Cabinet, though at first without office. Sir William Coventry, a bitter opponent of Clarendon, took his seat at the treasury board. The direction of Scotch affairs was left to Lord Lauderdale, a man of rough and insolent manner but of striking ability, and whose political views coincided as yet mainly with those of Ashley. Two great posts however were filled by men whose elevation showed the new part which Charles himself was resolved to take in the task of administration. Foreign affairs the King determined to take into his own hands: and this was adroitly managed by the nomination of Henry Bennet, now become Earl of Arlington, as Secretary of State. Bennet was a man of sense and experience, but he was flexible and unprincipled, he was in heart a Catholic, and ready to serve as a creature of the royal will. Thomas, Lord Clifford, the new head of the Treasury, was a Catholic by conviction and ready to sacrifice English freedom if the sacrifice would bring back England to his faith.

The Cabal.

Such was the ministry which from the accidental coincidence of the initial letters of the names of five of its members with those which make up the word was known as the Cabal. But the word Cabala, or Cabal, had as yet none of the odious meaning which after events attached to it; it meant indeed simply what we mean by "cabinet." Nor was there anything in the temper or conduct of the new ministers which foreboded ill. To all but the King and themselves the Catholic sympathies of Clifford and Arlington were unknown. The ministry seemed to represent the Presbyterians, and the Presbyterians as a party were true to the cause of freedom for which they had fought. Nor did the earlier acts of the "Cabal" belie its origin. Few ministries in fact have shown at their outset

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greater vigour or wisdom. Its first work was the Triple Alliance. The warlike outburst of feeling in the parliament at the prospect of a struggle with France had warned the French and English kings that a strife which both desired rather to limit than to widen must be brought to an end. The dexterous delays of Charles were seconded by the eagerness with which Lewis pressed on the Peace of Breda between England and the Dutch. To Lewis indeed it seemed as if the hour he had so long waited for was come. He had secured the neutrality of the Emperor by a secret treaty which provided for a division of the Spanish dominions between the two monarchs in case the King of Spain died without an heir. England, as he believed, was held in check by Charles, and like Holland was too exhausted by the late war to meddle with a new one. On the very day therefore on which the treaty of Breda was signed he sent in his formal claims on the Low Countries, and his army at once took the field. Flanders was occupied and six great fortresses secured in two months. Franche Comté was overrun in seventeen days.

English Diplomacy.

But the suddenness and completeness of the French success woke a general terror before which the King's skilful diplomacy gave way. Holland, roused to a sense of danger by the appearance of French arms on the Rhine, protested and appealed to England for aid; and though her appeals remained at first unanswered even England was roused from her lethargy by the French seizure of the coast towns of Flanders. The earlier efforts of English diplomacy indeed were of a selfish and unscrupulous kind. Holland, Spain, and France were tempted in turn by secret offers of alliance. A treaty offensive and defensive against all powers for the defence of the Spanish Netherlands was proposed to the Dutch. Spain was offered alliance and aid in return for the concession of free trade with her dominions in America and the Philippines. Before France was laid the project of an offensive and defensive alliance directed especially

against Holland, and perhaps against Spain, in return for which England stipulated for admission to a share in the eventual partition of the Spanish dominions, and for an assignment to her in such a case of the Spanish Empire in the New World. Each of these offers was alike refused. Spain looked on them as insincere. France regarded the terms of alliance as extravagant, while she was anxious to hold the Dutch to their present friendship and inactivity rather than to stir them to war. Holland itself, while desirous to check French ambition, still clung to its French alliance.

The Triple Alliance.

Repulsed as they were on every side the need of action became clearer every hour to the English ministers. The common refusal of France and the Dutch roused fears that these powers were secretly leagued for a partition of the Netherlands between them. Wider views too gradually set aside the narrow dreams of merely national aggrandizement. To Ashley and his followers an increase of the French power seemed dangerous not only to the European balance of power but to English Protestantism. Even Arlington, Catholic as in heart he was, thought more of the political interests of England and of the invariable resolve of its statesmen since Elizabeth's day to keep the French out of Flanders than of the interests of Catholicism. One course alone remained. To lull the general excitement Lewis had offered peace to Spain on terms either of the cession of Franche Comté or of the retention of his conquests in the Netherlands. The plan of John de Witt, the Pensionary of Holland, was to take France at its word and to force on Spain the acceptance of these terms by the joint pressure of England and the United Provinces. It was this plan which England suddenly adopted. In the opening of 1668 Sir William Temple was despatched to the Hague, and an alliance was concluded between England and Holland, in which Sweden, the third great Protestant power, was soon included.

Few measures have won a greater popularity than this

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Triple Alliance. "It is the only good public thing," says Pepys, "that hath been done since the King came to England." Even the Tory Dryden counted among the worst of Shaftesbury's crimes that "the Triple Bond he broke." In form indeed the alliance simply bound Lewis to adhere to terms of peace proposed by himself and those advantageous terms, the possession of the southern half of Flanders and of a string of fortresses which practically left him master of the Spanish Netherlands. But in fact it utterly ruined his plans. His offer of peace had been meant only as a blind. At the moment when Temple reached the Hague Lewis was writing to his general, Turenne, "I am turning over in my head things that are far from impossible, and go to carry them into execution whatever they may cost." Three armies were ready to march at once on Spain, Germany, and the Netherlands, when the intervention of the three powers suddenly arrested these schemes of conquest and forced Lewis to conclude peace at Aix la Chapelle. But the immediate gain was the least result of the Triple Alliance. It brought about that union of the powers of Europe against which, as Lewis felt instinctively, his ambition would dash itself in vain. It was Arlington's aim to make the Alliance the nucleus of a greater confederation: and he tried not only to perpetuate it but to include within it the Swiss Cantons, the Empire, and the House of Austria. His efforts were foiled; but the "Triple Bond" bore within it the germs of the Grand Alliance which at last saved Europe. To England it at once brought back the reputation which she had lost since the death of Cromwell. It was a sign of her re-entry on the general stage of European politics, and of her formal adoption of the balance of power as a policy essential to the welfare not of one or another nation but of Europe at large.

Lewis and Holland.

Lewis was maddened by the check. But it was not so much the action of England which galled his pride as the action of Holland. That "a nation of shopkeepers," for

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Lewis applied the phrase to the United Provinces long before Napoleon applied it to England, should have foiled his plans at the very moment of their realization "stung him," as he owned, "to the quick." He had always disliked the Dutch as Protestants and Republicans; he hated them now as an obstacle which must be taken out of his way ere he could resume his projects upon Spain. If he refrained from an instant attack on them it was to nurse a surer revenge. Four years were spent in preparations for a decisive blow. The French army was gradually raised to a hundred and eighty thousand men, while Colbert created a fleet which rivalled that of Holland in number and equipment. The steady aim of French diplomacy from the moment when Lewis was forced to sign the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was to isolate the United Provinces, to secure the neutrality of the Empire in any attack on them, to break the Triple Alliance by detaching Sweden from it and securing Charles, and to leave the Dutch without help save from the ineffectual good-will of Brandenburg and Spain.

Charles and the Cabal.

In England the French designs were favoured by the political difficulties which at once followed on the fall of Clarendon. The new Ministry, representing as it did the Presbyterian party and a policy of toleration, was in itself a declaration on the King's part that the executive power was no longer necessarily to act in harmonious co-operation with the Parliament. Its first steps in releasing Nonconformists from prison, in suffering conventicles to reopen, and suspending the operation of the Act of Uniformity, were in open defiance of the known will of the two Houses. But when Charles again proposed to his counsellors a general toleration he no longer found himself supported by them as in 1663. Even Ashley's mood was changed. The policy of the Council in fact was determined by the look of public affairs abroad. The victories of Lewis, the sudden revelation of the strength of France, roused even in the most tolerant minds a dread of Catholi-

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cism. Men felt instinctively that the very existence of Protestantism and with it of civil freedom was again to be at stake. Instead of toleration therefore the ministers pressed for a union of Protestants which would have utterly foiled the King's projects; and a scheme of Protestant comprehension which had been approved by the moderate divines on both sides, by Tillotson and Stillingfleet on the part of the Church as well as by Manton and Baxter on the part of the Nonconformists, was laid before the House of Commons in the session of 1668. Even its rejection failed to bring back Ashley and his party to their old position. They were still for toleration. But they were for a toleration the benefit of which did not extend to Catholics, "in respect the laws have determined the principles of the Romish religion to be inconsistent with the safety of your Majesty's person and government."

Parliament and the Cabal.

Again Charles was baffled. He had overthrown Clarendon in the belief that the Nonconformists must necessarily support him in the general reversal of Clarendon's policy. He found not only that to obtain a toleration for Catholics from his new ministers was as impossible as to obtain it from Clarendon himself, but that they were resolute to bring about that union of Protestants which Charles regarded as fatal to his designs and which the Chancellor's policy had at any rate prevented. Luckily for the King neither their new attitude at home nor their success abroad could win them the confidence of the House of Commons. As soon as it met they became the object of bitter attack. Their Comprehension Bill was rejected. Their suspension of the penalties for Nonconformity was denounced. "We shall remain unhappy," said one of the leaders of the Commons, Sir Edward Seymour, "so long as his majesty retains his present counsellors." It was in fact only by an early prorogation which was prolonged throughout the year that the ministers were saved from impeachment. Such a course however gave but a temporary respite; and Buckingham and Ashley

pressed on Charles the advisability of a dissolution. The House of Commons, they held, chosen as it had been eight years before in a moment of reaction, no longer really represented public opinion, and a new House would contain a larger proportion of members inclined to a policy of Protestant union. But Charles refused to dissolve the House. A Protestant union in fact was precisely what he wished to avoid. The pressure of a Parliament with Presbyterian leanings would be yet more fatal to the administrative independence he wished to maintain than a Cavalier Parliament. Above all such a Parliament would at once force him to take up a distinctly Protestant attitude, and to place himself at the head of the Protestant States as the leader in a European resistance to the supremacy of Catholicism and of France as the representative of Catholicism. How little such an attitude was to the King's taste we have already seen. He had been stirred to a momentary pride by the success of the Triple Alliance but he had never in heart abandoned his older policy. He still looked to France and to Catholicism as the most effective means of restoring his prerogative; and the sudden revelation of the power of Lewis, however it might startle his ministers into anxiety for freedom and Protestantism, only roused in the heart of their royal master a longing to turn it to the advantage of his crown.

Conversion of James.

Tempted however as he must have been to a new turn in his policy by the failure of his older plans at home and the display of French greatness, the sudden and decisive turn which he actually gave it was due above all to an event which, unknown as it as yet remained to Englishmen, was destined to exercise a vast influence from this moment on English politics. This was the conversion of his brother and presumptive successor James, Duke of York, to the Catholic faith. Though finally completed in the spring of 1672, this had for some time been imminent. The dull, truthful temper of the Duke hindered him from listening to his brother's remonstrances against this step;

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but Charles was far too keen-witted to be blind to the difficulties in which it was certain to involve him. That either Churchman or Presbyterian should sit still and wait patiently the advent of a Catholic King, and above all a King whose temper would necessarily make him a Catholic bigot, was, as he foresaw, impossible. The step could not long be concealed; and when once it was known a demand would arise for the exclusion of James from the succession, or at the least for securities which would fetter the crown. Even if such a demand were surmounted a struggle between James and the Parliament was in the end inevitable, and such a struggle, if it ever arose, could end only in the establishment of Catholicism and despotism or in the expulsion of James from the throne. To foresee these consequences required no great keenness of sight; they were as plainly foreseen by Ashley and the bulk of Englishmen, when once the truth was known, as by Charles. But Charles was far from contenting himself with foreseeing them. He resolved to anticipate the danger by hurrying on the struggle which was certain to come. France alone could help him in forcing despotism and Catholicism on England, and from this moment Charles surrendered himself utterly to France. He declared to Lewis his purpose of entering into an alliance with him, offensive and defensive. He owned to being the only man in his kingdom who desired such a league, but he was determined, he said, to realize his desire, whatever might be the sentiments of his ministers.

Treaty of Dover.

His ministers indeed he meant either to bring over to his schemes or to outwit. Two of them, Arlington and Clifford, were Catholics in heart like the King; and in January 1669 they were summoned with the Duke of York and two Catholic nobles, Lords Bellasys and Arundel, to a conference in which Charles, after pledging them to secrecy, declared himself a Catholic and asked their counsel as to the means of establishing the Catholic religion in his realm. It was resolved to apply to Lewis for aid in this purpose;

and Charles proceeded to seek from the King a "protection," to use the words of the French ambassador, "of which he always hoped to feel the powerful effects in the execution of his design of changing the present state of religion in England for a better, and of establishing his authority so as to be able to retain his subjects in the obedience they owe him." He was fully aware of the price he must pay for such a protection. Lewis was bent on the ruin of Holland and the annexation of Flanders. With the ink of the Triple Alliance hardly dry Charles promised help in both these designs. The Netherlands indeed could not be saved if Holland fell, and the fall of Holland was as needful for the success of the plans of Charles as of Lewis. It was impossible for Holland to look with indifference on the conversion of England into a Catholic power, and in the struggle to make it one the aid of the Dutch would be secured for the King's opponents. Charles offered therefore to declare his religion and to join France in an attack on Holland if Lewis would grant him a subsidy equal to a million a year. In the event of the King of Spain's death without a son Charles pledged himself to support France in her claims upon Flanders, while Lewis, made wiser by the results of his previous refusal, promised in such a case to assent to the designs of England on the Spanish dominions in America. On this basis, after a year's negotiations, a secret treaty was concluded in May 1670 at Dover in an interview between Charles and his sister Henrietta, the Duchess of Orleans. It provided that Charles should announce his conversion, and that in case of any disturbance arising from such a step he should be supported by a French army and a French subsidy. War was to be declared by both powers against Holland, England furnishing only a small land force but bearing the chief burthen of the contest at sea on condition of an annual subsidy of three hundred thousand pounds.

The Cabal and the War.

Nothing marks better the political profligacy of the age than that Arlington, the author of the Triple Alliance, should

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have been chosen as the confidant of Charles in his treaty of Dover. But to all save Arlington and Clifford the King's change of religion or his political aims remained utterly unknown. It would have been impossible to obtain the consent of the party in the royal council which represented the old Presbyterians, of Ashley or Lauderdale or the Duke of Buckingham, to the treaty of Dover. But it was possible to trick them into approval of a war with Holland by playing on their desire for a toleration of the Nonconformists. The announcement of the King's Catholicism was therefore deferred; and a series of mock negotiations, carried on through Buckingham, ended in the conclusion of a sham treaty which was communicated to Lauderdale and to Ashley, a treaty which suppressed all mention of the religious changes or of the promise of French aid in bringing them about and simply stipulated for a joint war against the Dutch. In such a war there was no formal breach of the Triple Alliance for the Triple Alliance only guarded against an attack on the dominions of Spain, and Ashley and his colleagues were lured into assent to it in 1671 by the promise of toleration.

Ashley and the Dutch War.

Toleration was still Ashley's first thought. He had provided for it only a year before in the constitution which he had drawn up with the aid of Locke for the new Colony of Carolina, which drew its name from King Charles. He looked the more hopefully to the King that in Scotland toleration had already been brought about by the royal authority. Nowhere had the system of conformity been more rigidly carried out than in the northern kingdom. Not only was the renunciation of the Covenant exacted from every parson and official but it was proposed to extend it to every subject in the realm. The fall of Clarendon however at once brought about a change. Lauderdale, who now took the lead in Scotch affairs, published in 1669 a royal decree which enabled many of the Presbyterian ministers to return to their flocks. A parliament which was called under his influence not only recognized the royal supremacy

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but owned the King's right to order the government of the Church and to dispense with ecclesiastical laws. The new system was just set on foot in Scotland when Charles came forward to tempt his English ministers with the same pledge of toleration. With characteristic audacity he removed the one stumbling-block in the way of his project by yielding the point to which he had hitherto clung, and promising, as Ashley demanded, that no Catholic should be benefited by the Indulgence. Whether the pledge of toleration was the only motive which induced the ministers to consent to the war with Holland it is hard to tell. Ashley had shown in bringing about the previous strife that he was no friend of the Dutch. He regarded a close alliance with France as the one means by which Charles could find himself strong enough to maintain religious liberty against the pressure of the Parliament. It is possible that like most statesmen of the time he looked on the ruin of Holland as a thing inevitable, and was willing to gain for England whatever he could out of the wreck. If the United Provinces were to become a part of France it was better that a part of their territory and that the most important part, the Brill, Flushing, and the mouths of the Scheldt, should fall as had been stipulated to England than that Lewis should have all.

The Declaration of Indulgence.

But whatever may have been the motives which influenced Ashley and his colleagues the bargain was at last struck; and now that his ministers were outwitted it only remained for Charles to outwit his Parliament. At the close of 1670 a large subsidy was demanded for the fleet under the pretext of upholding the Triple Alliance; and the subsidy was granted. In the spring of 1671 the two Houses were adjourned and vigorous preparations were made for the coming struggle. But as the rumours of war gathered strength the country at once became restless and dissatisfied. The power of Lewis, the renewed persecutions of the Huguenots, had increased the national hatred of the French. Protestants' hearts too trembled, as Baxter tells us, at the menacing

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armaments of the "Catholic King." On the other hand the sense of a common interest and a common danger had changed the old jealousy of Holland into a growing inclination towards the Dutch. Charles and his ministers stood almost alone in their resolve. "Nearly all the court and all the members of Parliament that are in town," wrote the French ambassador, "make cabals to turn the King from his designs." Prince Rupert and the Duke of Ormond, the heads of the old royalist and constitutional party, supported the Dutch embassy which was sent to meet the offers of mediation made by Spain. So great was the pressure that Charles was only able to escape from it by plunging hastily into hostilities. In March 1672 a captain in the King's service attacked a Dutch convoy in the Channel. The attack was at once followed by a declaration of war, and fresh supplies were obtained for the coming struggle by closing the Exchequer and suspending under Clifford's advice the payment of either principal or interest on loans advanced to the public Treasury. The suspension spread bankruptcy among half the goldsmiths of London; but with the opening of the war Ashley and his colleagues gained the toleration they had bought so dear. By virtue of his ecclesiastical powers the King ordered "that all manner of penal laws on matters ecclesiastical against whatever sort of Nonconformists or recusants should be from that day suspended," and gave liberty of public worship to all dissidents save Catholics who were allowed to say mass only in private houses.

Bunyan.

The effect of the Declaration of Indulgence went far to justify Ashley and his colleagues (if anything could justify their course) in the bargain by which they purchased toleration. Ministers returned after years of banishment to their homes and flocks. Chapels were reopened. The gaols were emptied. Hundreds of Quakers who had been the special objects of persecution were set free to worship God after their own fashion. John Bunyan left the prison which had for twelve years been his home,

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We have seen the atmosphere of excited feeling in which the youth of Bunyan had been spent. From his childhood he heard heavenly voices and saw visions of heaven; from his childhood too he had been wrestling with an overpowering sense of sin which sickness and repeated escapes from death did much as he grew up to deepen. But in spite of his self-reproaches his life was a religious one; and the purity and sobriety of his youth was shown by his admission at seventeen into the ranks of the "New Model." Two years later the war was over, and Bunyan, though hardly twenty, found himself married in 1645 to a "godly" wife as young and penniless as himself. So poor were the young couple that they could scarce muster a spoon and a plate between them; and the poverty of their home deepened perhaps the gloom of the young tinker's restlessness and religious depression. His wife did what she could to comfort him, teaching him again to read and write for he had forgotten his school-learning, and reading with him in two little "godly" books which formed his library. But darkness only gathered the thicker round his imaginative soul. "I walked," he tells us of this time, "to a neighbouring town; and sate down upon a settle in the street, and fell into a very deep pause about the most fearful state my sin had brought me to; and after long musing I lifted up my head; but methought I saw as if the sun that shineth in the heavens did grudge to give me light and as if the very stones in the street and tiles upon the houses did band themselves against me. Methought that they all combined together to banish me out of the world. I was abhorred of them, and wept to dwell among them, because I had sinned against the Saviour. Oh, how happy now was every creature over I; for they stood fast and kept their station. But I was gone and lost."

Bunyan in prison.

At last in 1653 after more than two years of this struggle the darkness broke. Bunyan felt himself "converted" and freed from the burthen of his sin. He joined a Baptist church at Bedford, and a few years later he

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became famous as a preacher. As he held no formal post of minister in the congregation his preaching even under the Protectorate was illegal and "gave great offence," he tells us, "to the doctors and priests of that county." He persisted however with little real molestation until the Restoration, but only six months had passed after the King's return when he was committed to Bedford Gaol on a charge of preaching in unlicensed conventicles. His refusal to promise to abstain from preaching kept him there eleven years. The gaol was crowded with prisoners like himself, and amongst them he continued his ministry, supporting himself by making tagged thread laces, and finding some comfort in the Bible, the "Book of Martyrs," and the writing materials which he was suffered to have with him in his prison. But he was in the prime of life; his age was thirty-two when he was imprisoned; and the inactivity and severance from his wife and little children was hard to bear. "The parting with my wife and poor children," he says in words of simple pathos, "hath often been to me in this place as the pulling of the flesh from the bones, and that not only because I am somewhat too fond of those great mercies, but also because I should have often brought to my mind the many hardships, miseries, and wants that my poor family was like to meet with should I be taken from them, especially my poor blind child who lay nearer to my heart than all besides. Oh, the thoughts of the hardships I thought my poor blind one might go under would break my heart to pieces. 'Poor child,' thought I, 'what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world! Thou must be beaten, must beg, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure the wind should blow upon thee.'" But suffering could not break his purpose, and Bunyan found compensation for the narrow bounds of his prison in the wonderful activity of his pen. Tracts, controversial treatises, poems, meditations, his "Grace Abounding," and his "Holy City," followed each other in quick

succession. It was in his gaol that he wrote the first and greatest part of his "Pilgrim's Progress."

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The "Pilgrim's Progress."

The book had only just been completed when the Indulgence set Bunyan free. Its publication was the earliest result indeed of his deliverance, and the popularity which it enjoyed from the first proves that the religious sympathies of the English people were still mainly Puritan. Before Bunyan's death in 1688 ten editions of the "Pilgrim's Progress" had already been sold; and though even Cowper hardly dared to quote it a century later for fear of moving a smile in the polite world about him its favour among the middle classes and the poor has grown steadily from its author's day to our own. It is now the most popular and the most widely known of all English books. In none do we see more clearly the new imaginative force which had been given to the common life of Englishmen by their study of the Bible. Its English is the simplest and homeliest English which has ever been used by any great English writer; but it is the English of the Bible. The images of the "Pilgrim's Progress" are the images of prophet and evangelist; it borrows for its tenderer outbursts the very verse of the Song of Songs and pictures the Heavenly City in the words of the Apocalypse. But so completely has the Bible become Bunyan's life that one feels its phrases as the natural expression of his thoughts. He has lived in the Bible till its words have become his own. He has lived among its visions and voices of heaven till all sense of possible unreality has died away. He tells his tale with such a perfect naturalness that allegories become living things, that the Slough of Despond and Doubting Castle are as real to us as places we see every day, that we know Mr. Legality and Mr. Worldly Wiseman as if we had met them in the street. It is in this amazing reality of impersonation that Bunyan's imaginative genius specially displays itself. But this is far from being his only excellence. In its range, in its directness, in its simple grace, in the ease with which it changes from lively dialogue to dramatic

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action, from simple pathos to passionate earnestness, in the subtle and delicate fancy which often suffuses its childlike words, in its playful humour, its bold character-painting, in the even and balanced power which passes without effort from the Valley of the Shadow of Death to the land "where the Shining Ones commonly walked because it was on the borders of heaven," in its sunny kindliness unbroken by one bitter word, the "Pilgrim's Progress" is among the noblest of English poems. For if Puritanism had first discovered the poetry which contact with the spiritual world awakes in the meanest souls Bunyan was the first of the Puritans who revealed this poetry to the outer world. The journey of Christian from the City of Destruction to the Heavenly City is simply a record of the life of such a Puritan as Bunyan himself seen through an imaginative haze of spiritual idealism in which its commonest incidents are heightened and glorified. He is himself the pilgrim who flies from the City of Destruction, who climbs the hill Difficulty, who faces Apollyon, who sees his loved ones cross the river of Death towards the Heavenly City, and how, because "the hill on which the City was framed was higher than the clouds, they therefore went up through the region of the air, sweetly talking as they went."

The attack on Holland.

Great however as was the relief of the Indulgence to men like Bunyan, it was difficult to wring from the bulk of the Nonconformists any expression of gratitude or satisfaction. Dear as toleration was to them, the general interests of religion were dearer, and not only these but national freedom was now at stake. Holland, the bulwark of Protestantism abroad, seemed to crumble into ruin at the first blow of France. Lewis passed the Rhine on the twelfth of June, and overran three of the States without opposition. It was only by skill and desperate courage that the Dutch ships under De Ruyter held the English fleet under the Duke of York at bay in an obstinate battle off the coast of Suffolk. Till almost the eve of the

struggle in fact the Dutch had been wrapt in a false security. The French alliance had been their traditional policy since the days of Henry the Fourth, and it was especially dear to the great merchant class which had mounted to power on the fall of the House of Orange. John de Witt, the leader of this party, though he had been forced to conclude the Triple Alliance by the previous advance of Lewis to the Rhine, had expressly refused to join England in an attack on France, and still clung blindly to her friendship. His trust only broke down when the glare of the French watch-fires was seen from the walls of Amsterdam.

The Prince of Orange.

For the moment Holland lay crushed at the feet of Lewis, but the arrogant demands of the conqueror roused again the stubborn courage which had wrested victory from Alva and worn out the pride of Philip the Second. De Witt was murdered in a popular tumult, and his fall called William, the Prince of Orange, to the head of the Republic. The new Stadholder had hardly reached manhood; but he had no sooner taken the lead in public affairs than his great qualities made themselves felt. His earlier life had schooled him in a wonderful self-control. He had been left fatherless and all but friendless in childhood; he had been bred among men who regarded his very existence as a danger to the state; his words had been watched, his looks noted, his friends jealously withdrawn. In such an atmosphere the boy grew up silent, wary, self-contained, grave in temper, cold in demeanour, blunt and even repulsive in address. He was weak and sickly from his cradle, and manhood brought with it an asthma and consumption which shook his frame with a constant cough; his face was sullen and bloodless, and scored with deep lines which told of ceaseless pain. But beneath this cold and sickly presence lay a fiery and commanding temper, an immovable courage, and a political ability of the highest order. William was a born statesman. Neglected as his education had been in other ways, for he knew nothing of letters or

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of art, he had been carefully trained in politics by John de Witt; and the wide knowledge with which in his first address to the States-General the young Stadholder reviewed the general state of Europe, the sagacity with which he calculated the chances of the struggle, at once won him the trust of his countrymen.

William and the French Invasion.

Their trust was soon rewarded. The plot of the two courts hung for its success on the chances of a rapid surprise, and with the approach of winter, a season in which military operations were then suspended, all chance of a surprise was over. William rapidly turned the respite to good account. Young as he was he displayed from the first the cool courage and dogged tenacity of his race. "Do you not see your country is lost?" asked the Duke of Buckingham when he was sent to negotiate at the Hague. "There is a sure way never to see it lost," replied William, "and that is to die in the last ditch." With the spring of 1673 the tide began to turn. Holland was saved, and province after province won back from the arms of France by William's dauntless resolve. Like his great ancestor, William the Silent, he was a luckless commander, and no general had to bear more frequent defeats. But he profited by defeat as other men profit by victory. His bravery indeed was of that nobler cast which rises to its height in moments of ruin and dismay. The coolness with which, boy-general as he was, he rallied his broken squadrons amidst the rout of Seneff and wrested from Condé at the last the fruits of his victory moved his veteran opponent to a generous admiration. It was at such moments indeed that the real temper of the man broke through the veil of his usual reserve. A strange light flashed from his eyes as soon as he was under fire; and in the terror and confusion of defeat his cold and repulsive manner was thrown aside for an ease and gaiety which charmed every soldier around him.

Parliament and the War.

The gallant struggle of the prince was hardly needed to win the sympathies of Englishmen to the cause of the

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Dutch. In the exultation of the first moment of triumph Charles had lavished honours on the leaders of both the parties in his cabinet. Clifford became Lord Treasurer, Ashley was made Chancellor and raised to the Earldom of Shaftesbury. But the dream of triumph soon passed away. The Duke of York had owned at the outset of the war that recourse could only be had to Parliament when success had put Charles in a position "to obtain by force what he could not get by pleasanter ways." But the delay of winter exhausted the supplies which had been procured so unscrupulously, while the closing of the treasury had shaken credit and rendered it impossible to raise a loan. It was necessary therefore in 1673, though the success Charles had counted on was still delayed, to appeal to the Commons. But the Commons met in a mood of angry distrust. The war, unpopular as it was, they left alone. What overpowered all other feelings was a vague sense, which we know now to have been justified by the facts, that liberty and religion were being unscrupulously betrayed. There was a suspicion that the whole armed force of the nation was in Catholic hands. The Duke of York was suspected of being in heart a Catholic, and he was in command of the fleet. Catholics had been placed as officers in the land force which was being raised for a descent upon Holland. Lady Castlemaine, the King's mistress, paraded her change of faith; and doubts were fast gathering over the Protestantism of the King. There was a general dread that a plot was on foot for the establishment of Catholicism and despotism, and that the war and the Indulgence were parts of the plot.

The Test Act.

The change of temper in the Commons was marked by the appearance of what was from that time called the Country party with Lord Russell, Lord Cavendish, and Sir William Coventry at its head, a party which sympathized with the desire of the Nonconformists for religious toleration but looked on it as its first duty to guard against the political and religious designs of the Court. The House

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listened unmoved to the fiery address of the new Lord Chancellor in favour of the war, an address which ended with the phrase, "Delenda est Carthago," so often quoted against him afterwards, as they listened unmoved to the King's declaration of his steady adherence to the Indulgence. "I shall take it very ill," said Charles, with unusual haughtiness, "to receive contradiction in what I have done; and, I will deal plainly with you, I am resolved to stick to my declaration." As to the Declaration of Indulgence however all parties in the House were at one. The Commons resolved "that penal statutes in matters ecclesiastical cannot be suspended but by consent of Parliament," and refused supplies till the Declaration was recalled. The King yielded after long hesitation, for the grant of supplies was still before the House and France counselled compliance. But the Declaration was no sooner recalled than the Parliament passed from considerations of the past to provisions for the future. A Test Act was passed through both Houses without opposition, which required that everyone in the civil and military employment of the State should take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, subscribe a declaration against transubstantiation, and receive the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. It was known that the dissidents were prepared to waive all objection either to oath or sacrament, and the result of the Bill therefore was to bring Protestants, if not to union, yet a step nearer to one another. Catholics on the other hand were wholly excluded from all share in the government of the State. The Act was fatal to the King's schemes, and Clifford at once counselled resistance while Buckingham talked flightily about bringing the army to London. But the grant of a subsidy was still held in suspense till the Test was accepted: and Arlington, who saw that all hope of carrying the "great plan" through was at an end and looked to the Test as a means of freeing himself from Clifford's rivalry in the cabinet, pressed Charles to yield. A disso-

lution in fact was the King's only resource, but in the temper of the nation a new Parliament would have been yet more violent than the present one. Charles therefore sullenly gave his assent to the Bill.

Few measures have ever brought about more startling results than the Test Act. It was no sooner passed than the Duke of York owned himself a Catholic and resigned his office as Lord High Admiral. Throngs of excited people gathered round the Lord Treasurer's house at the news that Clifford too had owned to being a Catholic and had laid down his staff of office. Their resignation was followed by that of hundreds of others in the army and the civil service of the Crown. On public opinion the effect of these discoveries was wonderful. "I dare not write all the strange talk of the town," says Evelyn. The resignations were held to have proved the existence of the dangers which the Test had been framed to meet. From this moment all trust in Charles was at an end. "The King," Shaftesbury said bitterly, "who if he had been so happy as to have been born a private gentleman had certainly passed for a man of good parts, excellent breeding, and well natured, hath now, being a Prince, brought his affairs to that pass that there is not a person in the world, man or woman, that dares rely upon him or put any confidence in his word or friendship." The one man in England indeed on whom the discovery of the King's perfidy fell with the most crushing effect was Shaftesbury himself. Ashley Cooper had piqued himself on a penetration which read the characters of men around him and on a political instinct which discerned every coming change. He had bought, as he believed, the Declaration of Indulgence, the release of the imprisoned Nonconformists, and freedom of worship for all dissidents, at the price of a consent to the second attack on Holland; and he was looked on by the public at large as the minister most responsible both for the measures he advised and the measures he had nothing to do with. But while facing the gathering storm of unpopularity Ashley learnt in a moment

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of drunken confidence the secret of the King's religion. He owned to a friend "his trouble at the black cloud which was gathering over England;" but troubled as he was he still believed himself strong enough to use Charles for his own purposes. His acceptance of the Chancellorship and of the Earldom of Shaftesbury, as well as his violent defence of the war on opening the Parliament, identified him yet more with the royal policy. It was after the opening of the Parliament, if we credit the statement of the French Ambassador, a statement which squares with the sudden change in his course, that he learnt from Arlington who desired to secure his help in driving Clifford from the royal councils the secret of the Treaty of Dover.

Shaftesbury's change of Policy

Whether this was so, or whether suspicion as in the people at large deepened into certainty, Shaftesbury saw he had been duped. To the bitterness of such a discovery was added the bitterness of having aided in schemes which he abhorred. His change of policy was rapid and complete. He pressed in the royal council for the withdrawal of the Declaration of Indulgence. In Parliament he supported the Test Act with extraordinary vehemence. But he was far from any thought of resigning his post. He clung to it in fact more tenaciously than ever, for the displacement of James and Clifford by the test left him as he thought dominant in the royal council and gave him hopes of revenging the deceit which had been practised on him by forcing his policy on the King. He was resolved to end the war. He had dreams of meeting the danger of a Catholic successor by a dissolution of the King's marriage with Catharine and by a fresh match with a Protestant princess. For the moment indeed Charles was helpless. He found himself, as he had told Lewis long before, alone in his realm. The Test Act had been passed unanimously by both Houses. Even the Nonconformists deserted him and preferred persecution to the support of his plans. The dismissal of the Catholic

officers made the employment of force, if he ever contemplated it, impossible, while the ill success of the Dutch war robbed him of all hope of aid from France. The firmness of the Prince of Orange had roused the stubborn energy of his countrymen; the French conquests on land were slowly won back; and at sea the fleet of the allies was still held in check by the fine seamanship of De Ruyter. Nor was William less successful in diplomacy than in war. The House of Austria was at last stirred to action by the danger which threatened Europe; and its union with the United Provinces laid the foundation of the Grand Alliance.

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Shaftesbury's Dismissal

Charles indeed was still firm to continue the war. He had gathered an army on the coast for a descent upon Holland, and he again sent his fleet to sea under Prince Rupert to clear the way for its landing. But the gallantry and seamanship of Van Tromp forced Rupert to withdraw after an indecisive engagement, and the descent on the Dutch coast had become impossible when the Parliament again met in October. The House was resolved upon peace, and Shaftesbury was as determined to end the war as the House itself. It was for this purpose that he threw himself into hearty alliance with the Country party in the Commons and welcomed the Duke of Ormond and Prince Rupert, who were looked upon as "great Parliament men," back to the royal council. It was to Shaftesbury's influence that Charles attributed the dislike which the Commons displayed to the war and their refusal of a grant of supplies for it until fresh religious securities were devised. It was at his instigation that an address was presented by both Houses at the end of 1673 against the plan of marrying James to a Catholic princess, Mary of Modena, a plan which as James was still without a male heir promised to secure the succession, should a son be the result of the marriage, in a Catholic line. But Charles was not yet inclined to play the part of a mere puppet in other men's hands, and the projects of Shaftesbury were

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The Public Panic.

suddenly interrupted by an unexpected act of vigour on the part of the King. The Houses were prorogued in November, and the Chancellor was ordered to deliver up the Seals.

"It is only laying down my gown and buckling on my sword," Shaftesbury is said to have replied to the royal bidding; and though the words were innocent enough, for the sword was part of the usual dress of a gentleman which he must necessarily resume when he laid aside the gown of the Chancellor, they were taken as conveying a covert threat. He was still determined to force on the King a peace with the States. But he looked forward to the dangers of the future with even greater anxiety than to those of the present. The Duke of York, the successor to the throne, had owned himself a Catholic; and almost everyone agreed that securities for the national religion would be necessary in the case of his accession. But Shaftesbury saw, and it is his especial merit that he did see, that with a King like James, convinced of his Divine Right and bigoted in his religious fervour, securities were valueless. From the first he determined to force on Charles his brother's exclusion from the throne, and his resolve was justified by the Revolution, which finally did the work he proposed to do. Unhappily he was equally determined to fight Charles with weapons as vile as his own. The result of Clifford's resignation, of James's acknowledgment of his conversion, had been to destroy all belief in the honesty of public men. A panic of distrust had begun. The fatal truth was whispered that Charles himself was a Catholic. In spite of the Test Act it was suspected that men Catholics in heart still held high office in the State, and we know that in Arlington's case the suspicion was just. Shaftesbury seized on this public alarm, stirred above all by a sense of inability to meet the secret dangers which day after day was disclosing, as the means of carrying out his plans. He began fanning the panic by tales of a Papist rising in

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London and of a coming Irish revolt with a French army to back it. He retired to his house in the City to find security against a conspiracy which had been formed, he said, to cut his throat. Meanwhile he rapidly organised the Country party in the Parliament and placed himself openly at its head. An address for the removal of ministers "popishly affected or otherwise obnoxious or dangerous" was presented on the re-assembling of the Houses in 1674. The Lower House called on the King to dismiss Lauderdale, Buckingham, and Arlington, and to disband the troops he had raised since 1664. A bill was brought in to prevent all Catholics from approaching the Court, in other words for removing James from the King's Councils. A far more important bill was that of the Protestant Securities which was pressed by Shaftesbury, Halifax, and Carlisle, the leaders of the new Opposition in the House of Lords, a bill which enacted that any prince of the blood should forfeit his right to the Crown on his marriage with a Catholic.

Peace with Holland.

The bill, which was the first sketch of the later Exclusion Bill, failed to pass but its failure left the Houses excited and alarmed. Shaftesbury intrigued busily in the City, corresponded with William of Orange, and pressed for a war with France which Charles could only avert by an appeal to Lewis, a subsidy from whom enabled him to prorogue the Parliament. But Charles saw that the time had come to give way. Spain was now joining Holland, and a war with Spain would have deprived English merchants of their most lucrative branch of commerce. The refusal of supplies by the Commons hastened the King's resolve. "Things have turned out ill," he said to Temple with a burst of unusual petulance, "but had I been well served I might have made a good business of it." His concessions however were as usual complete. He dismissed Buckingham and Arlington from office. He made peace with the Dutch. But Charles was never more formidable than in the moment of

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defeat, and he had already determined on a new policy by which the efforts of Shaftesbury and the Country party might be held at bay. Ever since the opening of his reign he had clung to a system of balance, had pitted Churchman against Nonconformist and Ashley against Clarendon, partly to preserve his own independence and partly with a view of winning some advantage to the Catholics from the political strife. The temper of the Commons had enabled Clarendon to baffle the King's attempts; and on his fall Charles felt strong enough to abandon the attempt to preserve a political balance and had sought to carry out his designs with the single support of the Nonconformists. But the new policy had broken down like the old. The Nonconformists refused to betray the cause of Protestantism, and Shaftesbury, their leader, was pressing on measures which would rob Catholicism of the hopes it had gained from the conversion of James. In straits like these Charles resolved to win back the Commons by boldly adopting the policy on which the House was set.

Danby.

The majority of its members were still a mass of Cavalier Churchmen, who regarded Sir Thomas Osborne, a dependant of Arlington's, as their representative in the royal councils. The King had already created Osborne Earl of Danby and raised him to the post of Lord Treasurer in Clifford's room. In 1674 he frankly adopted the policy of Danby and of his party in the Parliament. The policy of Danby was in the main that of Clarendon. He had all Clarendon's love of the Church, his equal hatred of Popery and Dissent, his high notions of the prerogative tempered by a faith in Parliament and the law. His policy rested like Clarendon's on a union between the King and the two Houses. He was a staunch Protestant, and his English pride revolted against any schemes which involved dependence on France. But he was a staunch royalist. He wished for a French war, but he would not force the King to fight France against his will. His terror

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of Popery failed to win him over to any plans for a change in the succession. The first efforts indeed of the King and his minister were directed to strengthen James's position by measures which would allay the popular panic. Mary, the Duke's eldest child and after him the presumptive heir to the Crown, was confirmed by the royal order as a Protestant. It was through Mary indeed that Charles aimed at securing the Prince of Orange. The popularity of William throughout the Protestant world was great; and in England, as the terror of a Popish King increased, men remembered that were James and his house excluded from the throne William as the King's nephew, the son of his sister Mary and the grandson of Charles the First, stood next in succession to the crown. The Prince was drawn by his desire to detach England from the French alliance into close connection with Shaftesbury and the leaders of the Country party, and already pledges from this quarter had reached him that he should be declared heir to the throne. It was to meet this danger that Charles resolved to offer William the hand of the Duke's daughter, Mary. Such a marriage secured James against the one formidable rival to his claims, while it opened to William a far safer chance of mounting the throne at his father-in-law's death in right of his wife. The prospect too of such a Protestant succession might well allay much of the panic which was spreading through the country as men looked forward to the accession of a Catholic King.

Danby and the Commons.

The secret negotiations for this marriage which began at the close of 1674 were accompanied by conferences between Danby and the bishops which restored the union between the Church and the Crown. The first fruits of this agreement were seen in the rigorous enforcement of the law against conventicles and the exclusion of all Catholics from Court; while the Parliament which re-assembled in 1675 was assured that the Test Act should be rigorously enforced. The change in the royal policy came not a moment too soon. As it was the aid of the Cavalier party

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which rallied round Danby hardly saved the King from the humiliation of being forced to recall the troops he still maintained in the French service. To gain a majority on this point Danby was forced to avail himself of a resource which from this time played for nearly a hundred years an important part in English politics. Every hour showed more clearly how fatal to its healthy working was the abandonment of the reforms which the Long Parliament and Cromwell had introduced into the composition of the House of Commons. The influence of that House was growing greater and greater on public affairs. In spite of the King's vigorous resistance it was reviewing expenditure, dictating its own policy in Church and State, checking the royal action even in foreign affairs, denouncing ministers and driving them from office, meddling now even with the succession to the Crown. It did this as representing the people, and yet the people could hardly be said to be represented. The counties alone really returned their own members, and in the counties the franchise was limited to freeholders. In all but the larger towns the nomination of members lay in the hands of close corporations. A large number of so-called boroughs had ceased to have any real existence at all. Their representatives were simply nominees of the Crown or of neighbouring landowners.

Policy of corruption and persecution.

On great questions so imperfect a composition of the representative body mattered indeed little, for whatever were their origin the members shared in the general national feeling and expressed fairly the national sentiment. But in the common business of Parliament and in questions of detail it told fatally on the temper of the House. The members were conscious of their power but they were checked by little sense of responsibility for its exercise. They were open therefore to the meanest and most selfish influences. Charles had done much by "closeting" them. Danby, bolder and less ingenious, trusted to coarser means. With him began the system of direct bribery which was to culminate in the Parliamentary corruption of the Pelhams.

He was more successful in winning back the majority of the Commons from their alliance with the Country party by reviving the old spirit of religious persecution. With the view of breaking up the growing union between the Churchmen and the Nonconformists as well as of driving from Parliament the Presbyterian members who formed the strength of the Country party, and whose numbers increased as time brought fresh elections, he proposed that the test which had been imposed by Clarendon on municipal officers should be extended to all functionaries of the State, that every member of either House, every magistrate and public officer, should swear never to take arms against the King or to "endeavour any alteration of the Protestant religion now established by law in the Church of England, or any alteration in the Government in Church and State as it is by law established." The Bill was forced through the Lords by the bishops and the Cavalier party, and its passage through the Commons was only averted by a quarrel on privilege between the two Houses which Shaftesbury dexterously fanned into flame.

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On the other hand the Country party remained strong enough to hamper their grant of supplies with conditions which rendered it unacceptable to the King. Eager as they were for the war with France which Danby promised, the Commons could not trust the King; and Danby was soon to discover how wise their distrust had been. For the Houses were no sooner prorogued in November 1675 than Charles revealed to him the negotiations he had been all the while carrying on with Lewis. To France, hard pressed as she was by the allies, the entry of England into the war would have been ruinous; and Lewis was eager to avert this danger by promising Charles a subsidy should the Parliament strive to force on him a war policy by refusing or limiting supplies. Charles, who still looked to France for aid in his plans and who believed war would deliver him helplessly into the power of the Parliament, was as ready to accept the money as Lewis to give it.

Charles turns to France.

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At this juncture therefore he called on Danby to sign a treaty by which on consideration of a yearly pension guaranteed on the part of France the two sovereigns bound themselves to enter into no engagements with other powers, and to lend each other aid in case of rebellion in their dominions. Such a treaty not only bound England to dependence on France but freed the King from all Parliamentary control. But his minister pleaded in vain for delay and for the advice of the Council. Charles answered his entreaties by signing the treaty with his own hand.

Danby's measures.

Danby found himself duped by the King as Shaftesbury had found himself duped; but his bold temper was only spurred to fresh plans for rescuing the King from his bondage to Lewis. To do this the first step was fully to reconcile the King and the Parliament, which met again in February 1677 after a prorogation of fifteen months. The Country party stood in the way of such a reconciliation, but Danby resolved to break its strength by measures of unscrupulous vigour for which a blunder of Shaftesbury's gave an opportunity. Shaftesbury despaired of bringing the House of Commons, elected as it had been fifteen years before in a moment of religious and political reaction, to any steady opposition to the Crown. He had already moved an address for its dissolution; and he now urged that as a statute of Edward the Third ordained that Parliaments should be held "once a year or oftener if need be" the Parliament by the recent prorogation of a year and a half had ceased legally to exist. The Triennial Act deprived such an argument of any force, and its only effect was to place the Country party in an injudicious position of general hostility to the existing Parliament. But Danby represented it as a contempt of the House, and the Lords at his bidding committed its supporters, Shaftesbury, Buckingham, Salisbury, and Wharton, to the Tower. While the Opposition cowered under the blow Danby pushed on a measure which was designed to win back alarmed Churchmen to confidence in the Crown. The terror of a Catholic successor grew steadily

throughout the country, and it was to meet this terror that Danby devised his Bill for the security of the Church. By this Bill it was provided that on the succession of any king who was not a member of the Established Church the appointment of bishops should be vested in the existing body of prelates, and that the King's children should be placed in the guardianship of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The cry for War.

The bill however failed in the Commons; and a grant of supply unchecked by the appropriation of the money to special services, a limitation which Charles steadily opposed, was only obtained by Danby's profuse bribery. The progress of the war abroad indeed was rousing panic in England faster than Danby could allay it. New successes of the French arms in Flanders and a defeat of the Prince of Orange at Cassel stirred the whole country to a cry for war. The two Houses united in an address to the Crown which prayed that England might enter into the Great Alliance that William had built up, but Charles parried the blow by demanding a supply before the war was declared and by a new prorogation of the House on a new refusal. Fresh and larger subsidies from France enabled him to continue this prorogation for seven months. But the silence of the Parliament did little to silence the country; and Danby took advantage of the popular cry for war to press an energetic course of action on the King. In its will to check French aggression the Cavalier party was as earnest as the Puritan, and Danby aimed at redeeming his failure at home by uniting the Parliament through a vigorous policy abroad.

Marriage of William and Mary.

As usual Charles appeared to give way. He was himself for the moment uneasy at the appearance of the French on the Flemish coast, and he owned that "he could never live at ease with his subjects" if Flanders were abandoned. He allowed Danby therefore to press on both parties the necessity for mutual concessions and to define the new attitude of England by reviving the project for a match between Mary and William of Orange.

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William's distrust of Arlington, by whom the proposal of it had been made to him, had led the Prince at first to set aside the scheme. But he had never lost sight of it, and the counsels of Sir William Temple had brought him in 1677 to make overtures for its realization. Charles and Danby had still the same reasons for desiring it, and the marriage took place on William's visit to England in September. As the King was childless and James had no son Mary was presumptive heiress of the Crown. The marriage therefore promised a close political union in the future with Holland and a corresponding opposition to the ambition of France. With the country it was popular as a Protestant match and as ensuring a Protestant successor to James. But Lewis was bitterly angered; he rejected the English propositions of peace and again sent his army in the field. Danby was ready to accept the challenge. The withdrawal of the English ambassador from Paris was followed in 1678 by an assembly of the Parliament; a warlike speech from the throne was answered by a warlike address from the House, large supplies were voted and an army raised.

Peace of Nimeguen.

But the actual declaration of war still failed to appear; indeed Charles was in heart as disinclined for war as ever. While Danby threatened France the King was busy turning the threat to his own profit, and gaining time by prorogations for a series of base negotiations. At one stage he demanded from Lewis a fresh pension for the next three years as the price of his good offices with the allies. Danby stooped to write the demand, and Charles added "this letter is written by my order, C.R." A force of three thousand English soldiers was landed at Ostend; but the allies were already broken by their suspicions of the King's real policy, and Charles soon agreed for a fresh pension to recall the brigade. The bargain was hardly struck when Lewis withdrew the terms of peace he had himself offered and on the faith of which England had ostensibly retired from the scene. Once more Danby


EUROPE
From 1648 to 1700
from Spruner
Bohemia
Andalusia
TUNIS
FEZ & MOROCCO

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offered aid to the allies. But all faith in England had now disappeared. One hostile power after another gave assent to the new conditions laid down by France, and though Holland, the original cause of the war, was saved, the Peace of Nimegwen in July 1678 made Lewis the arbiter of Europe.

The Catholic Hopes.

Disgraceful as the peace was to England, it left Charles the master of a force of twenty thousand men levied for a war he had refused to declare. It left him too with nearly a million of French money in his pocket. His course had roused into fresh life the old suspicions of his perfidy and of a secret plot with Lewis for the ruin of English freedom and of English religion. That there was such a plot we know; and from the moment of the Treaty of Dover the hopes of the Catholic party had mounted even faster than the panic of the Protestants. But they had been bitterly disappointed by the King's sudden withdrawal from the prosecution of his schemes after his four years' ineffectual struggle, and roused to wild anger by his seeming return to the policy of Clarendon. Their anger and disappointment were revealed in the letters from English Jesuits which were afterwards to play so fatal a part in begetting a belief in the plot, and in the correspondence of Coleman. Coleman was secretary of the Duchess of York and a busy intriguer, who had gained sufficient knowledge of the real plans of the King and of his brother to warrant him in begging money from Lewis for the work of saving Catholic interests from Danby's hostility by intrigues in the Parliament. A passage from one of his letters gives us a glimpse of the wild dreams which were stirring among the hotter Catholics of the time. "They had a mighty work on their hands," he wrote, "no less than the conversion of three kingdoms, and by that perhaps the utter subduing of a pestilent heresy which had so long domineered over a great part of the northern world. Success would give the greatest blow to the Protestant religion that it had received since its birth." But while the despair of the Catholic party was unknown their

previous attitude of confidence had stirred suspicions in the public mind which mounted into alarm when the Peace of Nimegwen suddenly left Charles master—as it seemed—of the position, and it was of this general panic that one of the vile impostors who are always thrown to the surface at times of great public agitation was ready to take advantage by the invention of a Popish plot.

Titus Oates.

Titus Oates, a Baptist minister before the Restoration, a curate and navy chaplain after it, but left penniless by his infamous repute, had sought bread in a conversion to Catholicism, and had been received into Jesuit houses at Valladolid and St. Omer. While he remained there he learnt the fact of a secret meeting of the Jesuits in London which was probably nothing but the usual congregation of the order, and on his expulsion for misconduct this single fact widened in his fertile brain into a plot for the subversion of Protestantism and the death of the King. His story was laid before Charles in the August of 1678 and received, as was natural enough, with the cool incredulity of one who knew what plot there really had been; but Oates made affidavit of its truth before a London magistrate, Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey, and at last managed to appear before the Council. He declared that he had been trusted with letters which disclosed the Jesuit plans. They were stirring rebellion in Ireland; in Scotland they disguised themselves as Cameronians; in England their aim was to assassinate the King and to leave the throne open to the Papist Duke of York. The extracts from Jesuit letters however which he produced, though they showed the bitter disappointment and anger of their writers at the King's withdrawal from his schemes, threw no light on the monstrous charges of a plot for his assassination. Oates would have been dismissed indeed with contempt but for the seizure of Coleman's correspondence. The letters of this intriguer, believed as he was to be in the confidence of the Duke of York, gave a new colour to the plot. Danby himself, conscious of the truth that

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there really were designs which Charles dared not avow, was shaken in his rejection of the disclosures and inclined to use them as weapons to check the King in his Catholic policy. But a more dexterous hand had already seized on the growing panic. Lord Shaftesbury, released after a long imprisonment from the Tower, ready since his discovery of the Treaty of Dover to believe in any conspiracy between the Catholics and the King, and hopeless of foiling the King's policy in any other way, threw himself into the plot. "Let the Treasurer cry as loud as he pleases against Popery," he laughed, "I will cry a note louder." But no cry was needed to heighten the popular frenzy from the moment when Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey, the magistrate before whom Oates had laid his information, was found in a field near London with his sword run through his heart. His death was assumed to be murder, and the murder to be an attempt of the Jesuits to "stifle the plot." A solemn funeral added to the public agitation; and the two houses named committees to investigate the charges made by Oates.

Shaftesbury and the Plot.

In this investigation Shaftesbury took the lead. Whatever his personal ambition may have been, his public aims in all that followed were wise and far sighted. He aimed at forcing Charles to dissolve the Parliament and appeal again to the nation. He aimed at driving Danby out of office and at forcing on Charles a ministry which should break his dependence on France and give a constitutional turn to his policy. He saw that no security would really avail to meet the danger of a Catholic sovereign, and he aimed at excluding James from the throne. But in pursuing these aims he threw himself from that moment wholly on the plot. He fanned the popular panic by accepting without question some fresh depositions in which Oates charged five Catholic peers with part in the Jesuit conspiracy. Two of these five, Lords Arundel and Bellasys, had in fact taken part in the preliminary conference which led to the Treaty of Dover. Of this nothing

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was known, but the five were sent to the Tower and two thousand suspected persons were hurried to prison. A proclamation ordered every Catholic to leave London. The trainbands were called to arms, and patrols paraded through the streets to guard against the Catholic rising which Oates declared to be at hand. Meanwhile Shaftesbury turned the panic to political account. He fiercely demanded in the House of Lords the exclusion of the Duke of York from the King's Council, and his demand was repeated in an address of the Commons. Charles met the attack with consummate skill. Anticipating the future Exclusion Bill, he declared himself ready to sanction any measures which secured the Protestant religion so long as they left untouched the right of hereditary succession and the just power of the Crown. Shaftesbury retorted by forcing through Parliament at the end of 1678 a bill which excluded Catholics from a seat in either House. The exclusion remained in force for a century and a half; but it had really been aimed against the Duke of York, and Shaftesbury was defeated by a proviso which exempted James from the operation of the bill.

Lewis and the Plot.

The plot, which had been supported for four months by the sole evidence of Oates began to hang fire at the opening of 1679; but a promise of reward brought forward a villain named Bedloe with tales beside which those of Oates seemed tame. The two informers were pressed forward by an infamous rivalry to stranger and stranger revelations. Bedloe swore to the existence of a plot for the landing of a Catholic army and a general massacre of the Protestants. Oates capped the revelations of Bedloe by charging the Queen herself at the bar of the Lords with knowledge of the plot to murder her husband. Monstrous as such charges were they revived the waning frenzy of the people and of the two Houses. The peers under arrest were ordered to be impeached. A new proclamation enjoined the arrest of every Catholic in the realm. A series of judicial murders began with the trial

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and execution of Coleman which even now can only be remembered with horror. But the alarm must soon have worn out had it only been supported by perjury. What gave force to the false plot was the existence of a true one. Coleman's letters had won credit for the perjuries of Oates, and a fresh discovery now won credit for the perjuries of Bedloe.

Dissolution of the Parliament.

From the moment when the pressure of the Commons and of Danby had forced Charles into a position of seeming antagonism to France Lewis had resolved to bring about the dissolution of the Parliament, the fall of the Minister, and the disbanding of the army which Danby still looked on as a weapon against him. The aims of the Country party were the same as those of the French King, and even before the Peace of Nimegwen the French ambassador, Barillon, had succeeded in opening a correspondence on these points with its leaders, with Shaftesbury, Halifax, and Lord Russell. A closer connection was negotiated in 1678 through the mediation of Algernon Sydney; and money was entrusted to Russell and other prominent members of the Country party by Barillon to be used in the bribery which, disgraceful as it was, was now almost necessary to counteract the bribery of Danby. The confederates soon brought a more effective weapon into play. The English ambassador at Paris, Ralph Montagu, returned home on a quarrel with Danby, obtained a seat in the House of Commons, and in spite of the seizure of his papers laid on the table of the House the despatch which had been forwarded to Lewis, demanding payment for the King's services to France during the late negotiations. The Commons were thunderstruck; for strong as had been the general suspicion the fact of the dependence of England on a foreign power had never before been proved. Danby's name was signed to the despatch, and he was at once impeached on a charge of high treason. But Shaftesbury was more eager to secure the election of a new Parliament than to punish his rival, and Charles was resolved to prevent at any price a trial which could not fail to reveal

the disgraceful secret of his foreign policy. Charles was in fact at Shaftesbury's mercy, and the end for which Shaftesbury had been playing was at last secured. In January, 1679, the Parliament of 1661 after the longest unbroken life in our Parliamentary annals was at last dissolved.

The New Ministry.

A new Parliament was at once summoned and its election took place in a tumult of national excitement. The process of Parliamentary corruption now took a further step. Danby had begun the bribery of members. With the election of 1679 began on a large and systematic scale the bribery or 'treating' of constituents. If members had come to realize the money value of the seats they held the voters for these members were quick to realize the money value of the seats they bestowed. "I am told," writes the Venetian ambassador, Sarotti, "that in the more conspicuous and populous places their election will cost some of the candidates five thousand scudi (about a thousand pounds) each." The new members were still for the most part Churchmen and country gentlemen, but they shared the alarm of the country, and even before their assembly in March their temper had told on the King's policy. James was sent to Brussels. Charles began to disband the army and promised that Danby should soon withdraw from office. In his speech from the throne he asked for supplies to maintain the Protestant attitude of his Government in foreign affairs. But it was impossible to avert Danby's fall. The Commons insisted on carrying his impeachment to the bar of the Lords. It was necessary to dismiss him from his post of Treasurer and to construct a new ministry. In the existing temper of the Houses such a ministry could only be found in the men who had brought about Danby's fall. Shaftesbury became President of the Council. The chiefs of the Country party, Lord Russell and Lord Cavendish, took their seats at the board with Lords Holles and Roberts, the older representatives of the Presbyterian party

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which had merged in the general Opposition. Savile, Lord Halifax, as yet known only as a keen and ingenious speaker, entered the ministry in the train of Shaftesbury with whom his family was connected. Lord Sunderland, a man adroit and unscrupulous but as yet ranked in the Opposition, was admitted to the Council; while Lord Essex and Lord Capel, two of the most popular among the Country leaders, went to the Treasury. The recall of Sir William Temple, the negotiator of the Triple Alliance, from his embassy at the Hague to fill the post of Secretary of State promised a foreign policy which would again place England high among the European powers.

Temple and his Council.

Temple returned with a plan of administration which, fruitless as it directly proved, is of great importance as marking the silent change which was passing over the English Constitution. Like many men of his time he was equally alarmed at the power both of the Crown and of the Parliament. In moments of national excitement the power of the Houses seemed irresistible. They had overthrown Clarendon. They had overthrown Clifford and the Cabal. They had just overthrown Danby. But though they were strong enough in the end to punish ill government they showed no power of securing good government or of permanently influencing the policy of the Crown. For nineteen years in fact with a Parliament always sitting Charles had had it pretty much his own way. He had made war against the will of the nation and he had refused to make war when the nation demanded it. While every Englishman hated France he had made England a mere dependency of the French King. The remedy for this state of things, as it was afterwards found, was a very simple one. By a change which we shall have to trace the Ministry has now become a Committee of State-officers named by the majority of the House of Commons from amongst the more prominent of its representatives in either House, whose object in accepting office is to do the will of that majority. So long as the majority of the

House of Commons itself represents the more powerful current of public opinion it is clear that such an arrangement makes government an accurate reflection of the national will. But obvious as such a plan may seem to us, it had as yet occurred to no English statesman. To Temple the one remedy seemed to lie in the restoration of the royal Council to its older powers.

The Cabinet.

This body, composed as it was of the great officers of the Court, the royal Treasurer and Secretaries, and a few nobles specially summoned to it by the sovereign, formed up to the close of Elizabeth's reign a sort of deliberative assembly to which the graver matters of public administration were commonly submitted by the Crown. A practice however of previously submitting such measures to a smaller body of the more important councillors must always have existed; and under James this secret committee, which was then known as the Cabala or Cabal, began almost wholly to supersede the Council itself. In the large and balanced Council which was formed after the Restoration all real power rested with the "Cabala" of Clarendon, Southampton, Ormond, Monk, and the two Secretaries; and on Clarendon's fall these were succeeded by Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley, and Lauderdale. It was by a mere coincidence that the initials of the latter names formed the word "Cabal," which has ever since retained the sinister meaning their unpopularity gave to it. The effect of these smaller committees had undoubtedly been to remove the check which the larger numbers and the more popular composition of the royal Council laid upon the Crown. The unscrupulous projects which made the Cabal of Clifford and his fellows a byword among Englishmen could never have been laid before a Council of great peers and hereditary officers of State. To Temple therefore the organization of the Council seemed to furnish a check on mere personal government which Parliament was unable to supply. For this purpose he proposed

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that the Cabala or Cabinet, as it was now becoming the fashion to term the confidential committee of the Council, should be abolished. The Council itself was restricted to thirty members, and their joint income was not to fall below £300,000, a sum little less than what was estimated as the income of the whole House of Commons. A body of great nobles and proprietors, not too numerous for secret deliberation and wealthy enough to counterbalance either the Commons or the Crown, would form, Temple hoped, a barrier against the violence and aggression of the one power and a check on the mere despotism of the other.

The Habeas Corpus Act.

Whatever might be the fate of these schemes the new Council and the new ministry gave fair hope of a wise and patriotic government. But the difficulties were still great. The nation was frenzied with suspicion and panic. The elections to the new Parliament had taken place amidst a whirl of excitement which left no place for candidates of the Court. The appointment of the new ministry indeed was welcomed with a general burst of joy, and its policy and that of the two Houses showed at once that a more liberal spirit had entered into public affairs. In two remarkable acts of the new Parliament English freedom made an advance even on the work of 1641. From the moment when printing began to tell on public opinion it had been gagged by a system of licenses. The regulations framed under Henry the Eighth subjected the press to the control of the Star Chamber, and the Martin Marprelate libels brought about a yet more stringent control under Elizabeth. Even the Long Parliament laid a heavy hand on the press, and the great remonstrance of Milton in his "Areopagitica" fell dead on the ears of his Puritan associates. But the statute for the regulation of printing which was passed immediately after the Restoration expired finally in 1679 and the temper of the present Parliament at once put an end to any attempt at re-establishing the censorship. To the new freedom of the press the

Habeas Corpus Act added new security for the personal freedom of every Englishman. Against arbitrary imprisonment provision had been made in the earliest ages by a famous clause in the Great Charter. No free man could be held in prison save on charge or conviction of crime or for debt; and every prisoner on a criminal charge could demand as a right from the court of King's Bench the issue of a writ of "habeas corpus," which bound his gaoler to produce both the prisoner and the warrant on which he was imprisoned that the court might judge whether he was imprisoned according to law. In cases however of imprisonment on a warrant of the royal Council it had been sometimes held by judges that the writ could not be issued, and under Clarendon's administration instances had in this way occurred of imprisonment without legal remedy. But his fall was quickly followed by the introduction of a bill to secure this right of the subject, and after a long struggle the Act which is known as the Habeas Corpus Act passed finally in the Parliament of 1679. By this great statute the old practice of the law was freed from all difficulties and exceptions. Every prisoner committed for any crime save treason or felony was declared entitled to his writ even in the vacations of the courts, and heavy penalties were enforced on judges or gaolers who refused him this right. Every person committed for felony or treason was entitled to be released on bail unless indicted at the next session of gaol delivery after his commitment, and to be discharged if not indicted at the sessions which followed. It was forbidden under the heaviest penalties to evade this operation of the writ as it had been evaded under Clarendon by sending a prisoner to any places or fortresses beyond the seas.

The Bill of Securities.

Great as was the value of the Habeas Corpus Act it passed almost unnoticed amidst the political storm which the ministry had to face. The question of the Succession threw all others into the shade. At the bottom of the national panic lay the dread of a Catholic King, a dread

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which the after history of James fully justified. Unluckily on the question of the succession the new ministers were themselves divided. Shaftesbury was earnest for the exclusion of James and he was followed in his plan of exclusion by Lord Russell. Against a change in the order of hereditary succession however Charles was firm; and he was supported in his resistance by a majority of the Council with Temple and Lord Essex, Lord Halifax, and Lord Sunderland at its head. It was with the assent of this party that Charles brought forward a plan for preserving the rights of the Duke of York while restraining his powers as sovereign. By this project the presentation to Church livings was to be taken out of his hands on his accession. The last Parliament of the preceding reign was to continue to sit; and the appointment of all Councillors, Judges, Lord-Lieutenants, and officers in the fleet, was vested in the two Houses so long as a Catholic sovereign was on the throne. The extent of these provisions showed the pressure which Charles felt, but Shaftesbury was undoubtedly right in setting the plan aside as at once insufficient and impracticable. The one real security for English freedom lay in a thorough understanding between King and Parliament; and the scheme of Charles set them against one another as rival powers in the realm. It was impossible in fact that such a harmony could exist between a Protestant Parliament and a Catholic sovereign.

The Exclusion Bill.

Shaftesbury therefore continued to advocate the Exclusion in the royal Council; and a bill for depriving James of his right to the Crown and for devolving it on the next Protestant in the line of succession was introduced into the Commons by his adherents. In spite of a powerful opposition from patriots like Lord Cavendish and Sir William Coventry who still shrank from a change in the succession the bill passed the House by a large majority. It was known that Charles would use his influence with the Peers for its rejection, and the Earl therefore fell back on the tactics of Pym. A bold Remonstrance was prepared

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in the Commons. The City of London, in which Shaftesbury's popularity had now risen to its greatest height, was ready with an address to the two Houses in favour of the bill. All Charles could do was to gain time by a sudden prorogation of the Parliament and by its dissolution at the end of May. But delay would have been useless had the Country party remained at one. The temper of the nation and of the House of Commons was so hotly pronounced in favour of the Exclusion of the Duke that but for the disunion among the ministers it must in the end have been secured. England would then have been spared the necessity for the Revolution of 1688. Though the disunion grew greater and hotter indeed the wiser leaders of the Country party were already leaning to the very change which the Revolution brought about. If James were passed over his daughter Mary, the wife of the Prince of Orange, stood next in the order of succession; and the plan devised by Temple, Lord Essex, and Lord Halifax after the failure of their bill of Securities was to bring the Prince over to England during the prorogation, to introduce him into the Council, and to pave his way to the throne.

Shaftesbury and Monmouth.

Unhappily Shaftesbury was contemplating a very different course. Ever since William had set aside his proposals in 1674, and above all since his marriage with the Duke's daughter, Shaftesbury had looked on the Prince of Orange as a mere adherent of the royal house and a supporter of the royal plans. He saw too that firm as was William's Protestantism he was as jealous as Charles himself of any weakening of the royal power or invasion of the royal prerogative. Shaftesbury's keen wit was already looking forward to the changes which a few years were to bring about; and his motive for setting aside William's claims is probably to be found in the maxim ascribed to him, that "a bad title makes a good king." Whatever were his motives however he had resolved not only to set aside the claims of the Duke and the Duke's children, Mary and Anne, as well as William's own claim as

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grandson of Charles the First, but to place the Duke of Monmouth on the throne. Monmouth was the eldest of the King's bastards, a weak and worthless profligate in temper, but popular through his personal beauty and his reputation for bravery. The tale was set about of a secret marriage between the King and his mother which would have made him lawful heir to the throne, and Shaftesbury brought him into public notice by inducing the King to put him at the head of the troops sent to repress a rising of the extreme Covenanters which broke out at this moment in the western counties of Scotland. Monmouth showed courage in routing the insurgents at Bothwell Brig on the Clyde as well as judgment in the mercy he extended to them after their defeat; and on his return Shaftesbury pressed the King to give him the command of the Guards, which would have put the only military force possessed by the Crown in Monmouth's hands.

Shaftesbury's Second Dismissal.

Sunderland, Halifax, and Essex, on the other hand—for Temple took less and less part in public affairs—were not only steadily opposed to Shaftesbury's project, but saw themselves marked out for ruin in the event of its success. They had advised the dissolution of the last Parliament; and the Earl's anger had vented itself in threats that the advisers of the dissolution should pay for it with their heads. The danger came home to them when a sudden illness of the King and the absence of James made Monmouth's accession a possible contingency. The three ministers at once induced Charles to recall the Duke of York; and though he withdrew to Scotland on the King's recovery Charles deprived Monmouth of his charge as Captain-General of the Forces and ordered him like James to leave the realm. Left alone in his cause by the opposition of his colleagues, Shaftesbury threw himself more and more on the support of the Plot. The prosecution of its victims was pushed recklessly on. Three Catholics were hanged in London. Eight priests were put to death in the country. Pursuivants and informers spread terror through every Catholic

household. He counted on the reassembling of the Parliament to bring all this terror to bear upon the King. But Charles had already marked the breach which the Earl's policy had made in the ranks of the Country party. He saw that Shaftesbury was unsupported by any of his colleagues save Russell. To Temple, Essex, or Halifax, it seemed possible to bring about the succession of Mary without any violent revolution; but to set aside the rights not only of James but of his Protestant children and even of the Prince of Orange was to ensure a civil war. It was with their full support therefore that Charles in October 1679 deprived Shaftesbury of his post of Lord President of the Council.

Shaftesbury's struggle.

The dismissal was the signal for a struggle to whose danger Charles was far from blinding himself. What had saved him till now was his cynical courage. In the midst of the terror and panic of the Plot men "wondered to see him quite cheerful amidst such an intricacy of troubles," says the courtly Reresby, "but it was not in his nature to think or perplex himself much about anything." Even in the heat of the tumult which followed on Shaftesbury's dismissal Charles was seen fishing and sauntering as usual in Windsor Park. But closer observers than Reresby saw beneath this veil of indolent unconcern a consciousness of new danger. "From this time," says Burnet, "his temper was observed to change very visibly." He became in fact "sullen and thoughtful; he saw that he had to do with a strange sort of people, that could neither be managed nor frightened." But he faced the danger with his old unscrupulous coolness. He reopened secret negotiations with France. Lewis was as alarmed as Charles himself at the warlike temper of the nation and as anxious to prevent the calling of a Parliament; but the terms on which he offered a subsidy were too humiliating even for the King's acceptance. The failure forced him to summon a new Parliament; and the panic which Shaftesbury was busily feeding with new tales of massacre and invasion returned

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members even more violent than the members of the House he had just dismissed. The project of Monmouth's succession was pressed with more daring than ever. Pamphlets appeared in open support of his claim. The young Duke himself suddenly quitted Holland and reappeared at court; and though Charles forced him after a time to leave London he refused to leave England altogether. Shaftesbury counted on the new Parliament to back the Duke's claim, and a host of petitions called on the King to suffer it to meet at the opening of 1680. Even the Council shrank from the King's proposal to prorogue its assembly to the coming November. But Charles prorogued it in the teeth of his counsellors. Alone as he stood he was firm in his resolve to gain time, for time, as he saw, was working in his favour. The tide of public sympathy was beginning to turn. The perjury of Oates was proving too much at last for the credulity of juries; and the acquittal of four of his victims showed that the panic was beginning to ebb. A far stronger proof of this was seen in the immense efforts which Shaftesbury made to maintain a belief in the plot. Fresh informers were brought forward to swear to a conspiracy for the assassination of the Earl himself and to the share of the Duke of York in the designs of his fellow-religionists. A paper found in a meal tub was produced as evidence of the new danger. Gigantic torchlight processions paraded the streets of London, and the effigy of the Pope was burnt amidst the wild outcry of a vast multitude.

The Reaction Begins.

Acts of yet greater daring showed the lengths to which Shaftesbury was ready to go. He had grown up amidst the tumults of civil war, and, greyheaded as he was, the fire and vehemence of his early days seemed to wake again in the recklessness with which he drove on the nation to a struggle in arms. Early in 1680 he formed a committee for promoting agitation throughout the country; and the petitions which it drew up for the assembly of the Parliament were sent to every town and grand jury and sent back again with thousands of signatures. Monmouth,

in spite of the King's orders, returned at Shaftesbury's call to London; and a daring pamphlet pointed him out as the nation's leader in the coming struggle "against Popery and tyranny." So great was the alarm of the Council that the garrison in every fortress was held in readiness for instant war. But the danger was really less than it seemed. The tide of opinion had fairly turned. Acquittal followed acquittal. A reaction of horror and remorse at the cruelty which had hurried victim after victim to the gallows succeeded to the pitiless frenzy which Shaftesbury had fanned into a flame. Anxious as the nation was for a Protestant sovereign its sense of justice revolted against the wrong threatened to James's Protestant children; and every gentleman in the realm felt insulted at the project of setting Mary aside to put the crown of England on the head of a royal bastard.

Petitioners and Abhorrers.

The memory too of the Civil War was still fresh and keen and the rumour of an outbreak of revolt rallied men more and more round the King. The host of petitions which Shaftesbury procured from the counties was answered by a counter host of addresses from thousands who declared their "abhorrence" of the plans against the Crown; and the country saw itself divided into two great factions of "petitioners" and "abhorrers," the germs of the two great parties which have played so prominent a part in our political history from the time of the Exclusion Bill. It was now indeed that these parties began to receive the names of Whig and Tory by which they were destined to be known. Each was originally a term of reproach. "Whig" was the name given to the extreme Covenanters of the west of Scotland, and in applying it to the members of the Country party the "abhorrer" meant to stigmatize them as rebels and fanatics. "Tory" was at this time the name for a native Irish outlaw or "bogtrotter," and in fastening it on the loyalist adherents of James's cause the "petitioner" meant to brand the Duke and his party as the friends of Catholic rebels.

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At this moment however a new and formidable opponent to Shaftesbury's plans presented himself in the Prince of Orange. The position of William had for some time been one of singular difficulty. He had been forced, and chiefly through the treacherous diplomacy of Charles the Second, to consent to the Treaty of Nimegwen which left France matchless in arms and dominant over Europe as she had never been before. Holland indeed was saved from the revenge of Lewis, but fresh spoils had been wrested from Spain, and Franche-Comté which had been restored at the close of the former war was retained at the end of this. Above all France overawed Europe by the daring and success with which she had faced single-handed the wide coalition against her. From the moment when the war came to an end her King's arrogance became unbounded. Lorraine was turned into a subject-state. Genoa was bombarded and its Doge forced to seek pardon in the ante

ance and rope.

chambers of Versailles. The Pope was humiliated by the march of an army upon Rome to avenge a slight offered to the French ambassador. The Empire was outraged by a shameless seizure of Imperial fiefs in Elsass and elsewhere which provoked remonstrances even from Charles. The whole Protestant world was defied by the increasing persecution of the Huguenots, a persecution which was to culminate in the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

William and England.

In the mind of Lewis peace meant a series of outrages on the powers around him; but every outrage helped the cool and silent adversary who was looking on from the Hague in his task of building up that Great Alliance of all Europe from which alone he looked for any effectual check to the ambition of France. The experience of the last war had taught William that of such an alliance England must form a part, and the efforts of the Prince ever since the peace had been directed to secure her co-operation. A reconciliation of the King with his Parliament was an indispensable step towards freeing Charles from his dependence on France, and it was such a reconciliation that William at first strove to bring about; but he was for a long time foiled by the steadiness with which Charles clung to the power whose aid was needful to carry out the schemes which he was contemplating. The change of policy however which followed on the fall of the Cabal and the entry of Danby into power raised new hopes in William's mind, and his marriage with Mary dealt Lewis what proved to be a fatal blow. James was without a son, and the marriage with Mary would at any rate ensure William the aid of England in his great enterprise on his father-in-law's death. But it was impossible to wait for that event, and though the Prince used his new position to bring Charles round to a decided policy his efforts remained fruitless. The storm of the Popish Plot complicated his position. In the earlier stages of the Exclusion Bill, when the Parliament seemed resolved simply to pass over James and to seat Mary at once on the throne after her uncle's death, William stood apart

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from the struggle, doubtful of its issue though prepared to accept the good luck if it came to him. But the fatal error of Shaftesbury in advancing the claims of Monmouth forced him into action. To preserve his wife's right of succession with all the great issues which were to come of it, as well as to secure his own, no other course was left than to adopt the cause of the Duke of York. Charles too seemed at last willing to purchase the support of the Prince in England by a frank adhesion to his policy abroad. He protested against the encroachments which Lewis was making in Germany. He promised aid to Holland in case of attack. He listened with favour to William's proposal of a general alliance of the European powers, and opened negotiations for that purpose with Brandenburg and Spain. William indeed believed that the one step now needed to bring England to his side in the coming struggle with Lewis was a reconciliation between Charles and the Parliament grounded on the plan for providing Protestant securities which Charles was ready again to bring forward.

William and the Exclusion.

But he still remained in an attitude of reserve when the Parliament at last met in October. The temper of the Commons was as bitter as Shaftesbury had hoped. It was in vain that Charles informed them of his negotiations for an European alliance and called on them to support him by reason and moderation. The House was too full of the sense of danger at home to heed dangers abroad. Its first act was to vote that its care should be "to suppress Popery and prevent a Popish successor." Rumours of a Catholic plot in Ireland were hardly needed to set aside all schemes of Protestant securities and to push the Exclusion Bill through the Commons without a division. So strong had Monmouth's party become that a proposal to affirm the rights of Mary and William by name in the Bill was evaded and put aside. From this moment the course of the Prince became clear. So resolute was the temper of the Lower House that even Temple and Essex now gave their adhesion to the Exclusion Bill as a necessity, and Sunder-

land himself wavered towards accepting it. But Halifax, whose ability and eloquence had now brought him fairly to the front, opposed it resolutely and successfully in the Lords; and Halifax was but the mouthpiece of William. "My Lord Halifax is entirely in the interest of the Prince of Orange," the French ambassador, Barillon, wrote to his master, "and what he seems to be doing for the Duke of York is really in order to make an opening for a compromise by which the Prince of Orange may benefit." The Exclusion Bill once rejected, Halifax followed up the blow by bringing forward a plan of Protestant securities which would have taken from James on his accession the right of veto on any bill passed by the two Houses, the right of negotiating with foreign states, or of appointing either civil or military officers save with the consent of Parliament. This plan, like his opposition to the Exclusion, was no doubt prompted by the Prince of Orange; and the States of Holland supported it by pressing Charles to come to an accommodation with his subjects which would enable them to check the perpetual aggressions which France was making on her neighbours.

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But if the Lords would have no Exclusion Bill the Commons with as good reason would have no Securities Bill. They felt—as one of the members for London fairly put it—that such securities would break down at the very moment they were needed. A Catholic king, should he ever come to the throne, would have other forces besides those in England to back him. "The Duke rules over Scotland; the Irish and the English Papists will follow him; he will be obeyed by the officials of high and low rank whom the King has appointed; he will be just such a king as he thinks good." Shaftesbury however was far from resting in a merely negative position. He made a despairing effort to do the work of exclusion by a Bill of Divorce, which would have enabled Charles to put away his Queen on the ground of barrenness and by a fresh marriage to give a Protestant heir to the throne. The

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Earl's course shows that he felt the weakness of Monmouth's cause; and perhaps that he was already sensible of a change in public feeling. This however Shaftesbury resolved to check and turn by a great public impeachment which would revive and establish the general belief in the Plot. Lord Stafford, who from his age and rank was looked on as the leader of the Catholic party, had lain a prisoner in the Tower since the first outburst of popular frenzy. He was now solemnly impeached; and his trial in December 1680 mustered the whole staff of informers to prove the truth of a Catholic conspiracy against the King and the realm. The evidence was worthless; but the trial revived, as Shaftesbury had hoped, much of the old panic, and the condemnation of the prisoner by a majority of his peers was followed by his death on the scaffold. The blow produced its effect on all but Charles. Sunderland again pressed the King to give way. But deserted as he was by his ministers and even by his mistress, for the Duchess of Portsmouth had been cowed into supporting the Exclusion by the threats of Shaftesbury, Charles was determined to resist. On the coupling of a grant of supplies with demands for a voice in the appointment of officers of the royal garrisons he prorogued the Parliament.

Charles turns again to France.

William's policy had failed to bring the Commons round to the King's plans and Charles sullenly turned again to France. All dreams of heading Europe in her strife against Lewis were set aside. Charles became deaf to the projects of the Prince of Orange and listened to the remonstrances which James addressed to him through his favourite Churchill in favour of an alliance with the Catholic King. With characteristic subtlety however he dissolved the existing Parliament and called a new one to meet in March 1681. The act was a mere blind. The King's aim was to frighten the country into reaction by the dread of civil strife; and his summons of the Parliament to Oxford was an appeal to the country against the disloyalty of the capital and an adroit means of reviving

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the memories of the Civil War. With the same end he ordered his guards to accompany him on the pretext of anticipated disorder; and Shaftesbury, himself terrified at the projects of the Court, aided the King's designs by appearing with his followers in arms on the plea of self-protection. The violence of the Earl's party only strengthened the resolution of the King. Monmouth renewed his progresses through the country, and was met by deputations and addresses in every town he visited. London was so restless that riots broke out in its streets. Revolt seemed at hand, and Charles hastened to conclude his secret negotiations with France. Lewis was as ready for an agreement as Charles. The one King verbally pledged himself to a policy of peace, in other words to withdrawal from any share in the Grand Alliance which William was building up. The other promised a small subsidy which with the natural growth of the Royal revenue sufficed to render Charles, if he remained at peace, independent of Parliamentary aids.

The Parliament at Oxford.

It was with this arrangement already concluded that Charles met his Parliament at Oxford. The members of the House of Commons were the same as those who had been returned to the Parliaments he had just dissolved, and their temper was naturally embittered by the two dissolutions. But their violence simply played into the King's hands. William's party still had hopes of bringing about a compromise; but the rejection of a new Limitation Bill brought forward by Halifax, which while conceding to James the title of King would have vested the actual functions of government in the Prince and Princess of Orange during his reign, alienated the more moderate and sensible of the Country party. They were alienated still more by a bold appeal of Shaftesbury to Charles himself to recognize Monmouth as his successor. The attempt of the Lower House to revive the panic by impeaching an informer named Fitzharris before the House of Lords, in defiance of the constitutional rule which entitled him as a commoner

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to a trial by his peers in the course of common law, did still more to throw public opinion on the side of the Crown. Shaftesbury's course in fact went wholly on a belief that the penury of the Treasury left Charles at his mercy, and that a refusal of supplies must wring from the King his assent to the Exclusion. But the gold of France had freed the King from his thraldom. He had used the Parliament simply to exhibit himself as a sovereign whose patience and conciliatory temper were rewarded with insult and violence; and now that his end was accomplished he no sooner saw the Exclusion Bill reintroduced into the Commons than he suddenly dissolved the Houses after but a month's sitting and appealed in a royal declaration to the justice of the nation at large.

Dryden.

The appeal was met by an almost universal burst of loyalty. The Church rallied to the King; his declaration was read from every pulpit; and the Universities solemnly decided that "no religion, no law, no fault, no forfeiture" could avail to bar the sacred right of hereditary succession. The arrest of Shaftesbury on a charge of suborning false witnesses to the Plot marked the new strength of the Crown. The answer of the nation at large was uttered in the first great poem of John Dryden. Born in 1631 of a good Northamptonshire family, Dryden had grown up amidst the tumult of the civil wars in a Puritan household. His grandfather, Sir Erasmus Dryden, had gone to prison at seventy rather than contribute to a forced loan. His father had been a committeeman and sequestrator under the Commonwealth. He entered life under the protection of a cousin, Sir Gilbert Pickering, who sate as one of the judges at the King's trial. Much of this early training lived in Dryden to the last. He never freed himself from the Puritan sense of religion, from the Puritan love for theological discussion and ecclesiastical controversy. Two of his greatest poems, the "Religio Laici," and the "Hind and Panther," are simply theological treatises in verse. Nor did the Commonwealth's man ever

die in him. "All good subjects," he could say boldly in an hour of royal triumph, "abhor arbitrary power whether in one or in many;" and no writer has embodied in more pregnant words the highest claim of a people's right, that

> "right supreme
> To make their kings, for kings are made for them."

Dryden grew up too amidst the last echoes of the Elizabethan verse. Jonson and Massinger, Webster and Shirley, were still living men in his childhood. The lyrics of Herrick, the sweet fancies of George Herbert, were fresh in men's ears as he grew to manhood. Even when he entered into the new world of the Restoration some veterans of this nobler school, like Denham and Waller, were still lingering on the stage. The fullness and imaginative freedom of Elizabethan prose lived on till 1677 in Jeremy Taylor, while Clarendon preserved to yet later years the grandeur and stateliness of its march. Above all Milton still sate musing on the Paradise Lost in the tapestried chamber of his house in Bunhill Fields.

Dryden and the Critical Poets.

Throughout his life something of the spirit of the age which he was the last to touch lived on in Dryden. He loved and studied Chaucer and Spenser even while he was copying Molière and Corneille. His noblest panegyric was pronounced over Shakspere. At the time when Rymer, the accepted critic of the Restoration, declared "our poetry of the last age as rude as our architecture," and sneered at "that Paradise Lost of Milton's which some are pleased to call a poem," Dryden saw in it "one of the greatest, most noble and sublime poems which either this age or nation hath produced." But whether in mind or in life Dryden was as unlike the Elizabethans as he was in his earlier years unlike the men of the poetic school which followed him. Of that school, the critical school as it has been called of English poetry, he was indeed the founder. He is the first of our great poets in whom "fancy is but the feather of the pen." Whether he would or no Dryden's temper was always intellectual. He was a

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poet, for if dead to the subtler and more delicate forms of imaginative delight he loved grandeur, and his amazing natural force enabled him to realize in great part the grandeur which he loved. But beneath all his poetry lay a solid bottom of reason. His wildest outbursts of passion are broken by long passages of cool argument. His heroes talk to his heroines in a serried dialectic. Every problem of morals, of religion, of politics, forces itself into his verse, and is treated there in the same spirit of critical inquiry.

His Tragedies

In other words Dryden was the poet of his day. But he was the poet of a time of transition, and his temper is transitional. It was only by slow and uncertain steps that he advanced to the full rationalism of the Critical school. His first little poem, some verses written in 1659 on the death of Lord Hastings, is a mass of grotesque extravagances in the worst style of Donne. The dramas of his early work after the Restoration are crowded with the bombastic images, the affected conceits, the far-fetched metaphors which it is the merit of the critical school to have got rid of. In his tragedies indeed the tradition of a freer and larger time jarred against the unities and the critical rules with which he strove to bind himself. If he imitated the foreign stage he could not be blind to the fact that the Elizabethan playwrights possessed "a more masculine fancy and a greater spirit in the writing than there is in any of the French." He followed Corneille but he was haunted by memories of 'the divine Shakspere.' His failure indeed sprang from the very truth of his poetic ideal. He could not be imaginative in the highest dramatic sense, but the need of imaginativeness pressed on him while it was ceasing to press on his brother playwrights. He could not reach the sublime, but neither could he content himself as they did with the prosaic; he rants, fumes, and talks wild bombast in the vain effort after sublimity.

His Comedies.

Dryden failed in Comedy as he failed in Tragedy, but here the failure sprang from the very force and vigour of

his mind. He flung himself like the men of his day into the reaction against Puritanism. His life was that of a libertine; and his marriage with a woman of fashion who was yet more dissolute than himself only gave a new spur to his debaucheries. Large as was his income from the stage, and it equalled for many years the income of a country squire, he was always in debt and forced to squeeze gifts from patrons by fulsome adulation. Like the rest of the fine gentlemen about him he aired his Hobbism in sneers at the follies of religion and the squabbles of creeds. The grossness of his comedies rivalled that of Wycherley himself. But it is the very extravagance of his coarseness which shows how alien it was to the real temper of the man. A keen French critic has contrasted the libertinism of England under the Restoration with the libertinism of France, and has ruthlessly pointed out how the gaiety, the grace, the naturalness of the one disappears in the forced, hard, brutal brilliancy of the other. The contrast is a just one. The vice of the English libertine was hard and unnatural just because his real nature took little share in it. In sheer revolt against the past he was playing a part which was not his own and which he played badly, which he forced and exaggerated, just because it was not his own. Dryden scoffs at priests and creeds, but his greater poetry is coloured throughout with religion. He plays the rake, but the two pictures which he has painted with all his heart are the pictures of the honest country squire and the poor country parson. He passes his rivals in the grossness of his comedies, he flings himself recklessly into the evil about him because it is the fashion and because it pays. But he cannot sport lightly and gaily with what is foul. He is driven if he is coarse at all to be brutally coarse. His freedom of tone, to borrow Scott's fine remark, is like the forced impudence of a timid man.

The New Criticism.

Slowly but ceaselessly however the critical taste of his time told on Dryden. The poetry of good sense, as it

AP. II. proudly called itself, triumphed in Boileau, and the rules of taste and form which Boileau laid down were accepted as the law of letters on the one side of the Channel as well as on the other. Andrew Marvell, in whom the older imaginative beauty still found a worshipper, stood alone in his laughter at the degradation of poetry into prose. Fancy was set aside for reason, "that substantial useful part which gains the head, while Fancy wins the heart." It was the head and not the heart that poetry now cared to gain. But with all its prose the new criticism did a healthy work in insisting on clearness, simplicity, and good sense. In his "Rehearsal" Buckingham quizzed fairly enough the fume and bombast of Dryden's tragedies. But Dryden was already echoing his critics' prayer for a year "of prose and sense." He was tired of being "the Sisyphus of the stage, to roll up a stone with endless labour, which is perpetually falling down again." "To the stage," he owned, "my genius never much inclined me," and he had long had dreams, stirred no doubt by his admiration for Milton, of undertaking some epic story. But need held him to the boards and years passed by, and Dryden still stood in the second rank of English poetry, outdone in comedy by men like Etherege and rivalled in tragedy by men like Settle. Only in a single poem, that of the "Annus Mirabilis," in 1671, had he given any true indications of his surpassing powers.

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Dryden and the Plot.

It was in this mood of failure and disappointment that the Popish Plot found him. Of its reality he made no question; "a plot," he says emphatically, "there was." But his cool good sense saw how the truth had been "dashed and brewed with lies." What stirred him more was, as he believed, the return of anarchy. Puritan as his training had been he had grown up like the bulk of the men about him with a horror of the social and religious disorders which the civil war had brought in its train. He clung to authority as a security against revolution. It was this that drove him from the Puritanism of his youth to the Anglican dogmatism of the "Religio Laici," and from thence to the tempered

Catholicism of the "Hind and Panther." It was this which made him sing by turns the praises of Cromwell and the praises of the King whom Cromwell had hunted from one refuge to another. No man denounced the opponents of the crown with more ruthless invective. No man humbled himself before the throne with more fulsome adulation. Some of this no doubt was mere flattery, but not all of it. Dryden like his age was conscious that new currents of feeling and opinion were sweeping him from the old moorings of mankind. But he shrank in terror from the wide ocean over whose waters he drifted. In religion, he was a rationalist, a sceptic, whether he would or no; but he recoiled from the maze of "anxious thoughts" which spread before him, of thoughts "that in endless circles roll without a centre where to fix the soul," and clung to the Church that would give him, if not peace, at least quiet. In politics he was as much a rationalist as in religion, but he turned horrorstruck from the sight of a "state drawn to the dregs of a democracy," and in the crisis of the Popish Plot he struck blindly for the crown.

"Absalom and Ahitophel"

Dryden like the royalists generally believed that the arrest of Shaftesbury had alone saved England from civil war, and from that worst of civil wars where a son fights against his father's throne. In his "Absalom and Ahitophel" the poet told the story of the threatened strife under the thin veil of the revolt against David. Charles was the Hebrew king, Monmouth was Absalom, Shaftesbury was the wily Ahitophel who drew him into revolt. The "Absalom" was a satire, and it was the first great English satire, for the satires of Marston and Hall were already forgotten. It is in ages indeed like the Restoration that satire naturally comes to the front. In the reaction after a time of high ideals and lofty efforts the sense of contrast between the aims and the powers of man, between his hopes and their fulfilment, takes form whether in the kindly pitifulness of humour or in the bitter revulsion of satire. And mingled with this in Dryden was an honest indignation at

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the hypocrisy around him. The men he attacks are not real men but actors. Buckingham and Shaftesbury, the infidel leader of the Independents and the deistical leader of the Presbyterians, were alike playing a part. But the largeness and fairness of his temper saved Dryden's satire from the vicious malignity of that of Pope. He has an artistic love of picturesque contrast, he has a great writer's pride in the consciousness of power. But he has no love of giving pain for the mere pain's sake, and he has a hatred of unfairness. Even in his contempt for the man he is just to Buckingham, and his anger does not blind him to the great qualities of Shaftesbury.

Progress of the reaction.

The even and effortless force of the poem, the disappearance of inequalities and faults of taste, showed that Dryden was at last master of his powers. But it was not this nervous strength alone which suddenly brought him to the forefront of English letters. It was the general sense that his "Absalom" was the opening of a new literary development. Its verse, free from the old poetic merits as from the old poetic faults, clear, nervous, condensed, argumentative, proclaimed the final triumph of the "poetry of good sense." Its series of portraits showed the new interest in human character which had been stirred by the Civil War, and which was deepening with the growing indifference to larger thoughts of nature and the growing concentration of man's thoughts on man. They led the way to that delight in the analysis of character in its lowest as in its highest forms which produced the essayists and the novel. Above all the "Absalom" was the first work in which literature became a great political power. In it Dryden showed himself the precursor of Swift and of Bolingbroke, of Burke and of Cobbett. The poem was bought eagerly, and it undoubtedly helped to bring about that triumph of the King with the prophecy of which it closed. But prisoner as Shaftesbury was, the struggle with him was not yet over. London was still true to him; only a few days after the appearance of

the "Absalom and Ahitophel" the Middlesex Grand Jury ignored the bill of his indictment, and his discharge from the Tower was welcomed in every street with bonfires and ringing of bells. But a fresh impulse was given to the loyal enthusiasm of the country at large by the publication of a plan said to have been found among his papers, the plan of a secret association for the furtherance of the Exclusion whose members bound themselves to obey the orders of Parliament even after its prorogation or dissolution by the Crown. So general was the reaction that Halifax who had now become the most conspicuous member of the royal Council, though scared by the Whig threats of impeachment, advised the calling of a new Parliament in the belief that it would be a loyal one. William of Orange too visited England to take advantage of the turn of affairs to pin Charles to the policy of the Alliance.

Shaftesbury's Death.

The King met both counsels with evasion. He kept his own secret. Hyde was the only one of his ministers whom he had trusted with the knowledge of his French negotiations and they remained as unknown to William as to Halifax. But their effect was seen in the new vigour which Lewis gave to his policy at home and abroad. He was resolved to bring about national unity by crushing the French Protestants, to gain a strong frontier to the East, and to be ready to seize the Spanish heritage on the death of Charles the Fourth. The agreement was no sooner made with Charles than persecution fell heavy on the Huguenots; and the seizure of Strassburg and Casale, the keys of Germany and Italy, with that of Luxemburg, the key of the United Provinces, brought Europe to the verge of war. Charles, indeed, was anxious to avoid war and he was as anxious to avoid Parliaments whose assembly war would certainly force upon him as Lewis himself. The tide of loyal reaction was mounting in fact higher every day. The King secured the adhesion of the Church by a renewed

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persecution of the Nonconformists which drove Penn from England and thus brought about the settlement of Pennsylvania as a refuge for his fellow-Quakers. He was soon strong enough to call back James to Court and to arrest Monmouth who had resumed his almost royal progresses as a means of again stirring opinion in his favour. London alone remained firm for the Whigs; but the friendship of a Tory mayor secured the nomination of Tory sheriffs in the summer of 1682, and the juries they packed left the life of every Exclusionist at the mercy of the Crown. Shaftesbury saw himself threatened with ruin. It was in vain that he offered to waive his plans of exclusion and to fall in with the King's older proposals of a limited monarchy in the case of James's accession. The loss of London left him without a shelter and drove him to wild conspiracies with a handful of adventurers who were as desperate as himself. He hid himself in the City where he boasted that ten thousand "brisk boys" were ready to appear at his call. From his hiding-place he urged his friends to rise in arms. But their delays drove him to flight; and in January 1683, two months after his arrival in Holland, the soul of the great leader, great from his immense energy and the wonderful versatility of his genius, but whose genius and energy had ended in wrecking for the time the fortunes of English freedom and in associating the noblest of causes with the vilest of crimes, found its first quiet in death.

The Rye-House Plot.

The flight of Shaftesbury proclaimed the triumph of the King. His marvellous sagacity had told him when the struggle was over and further resistance useless. But the country leaders who had delayed to answer the Earl's call still believed opposition possible, and looked for support to the discontent of the Nonconformists at the revival of the penal laws. Monmouth, with Lord Essex, Lord Howard of Ettrick, Lord Russell, Hampden, and Algernon Sidney, held meetings with the view of founding an association whose agitation should force on the King the assembly of a Parliament. The more desperate spirits who had clus-

tered round Shaftesbury as he lay hidden in the City took refuge in plots of assassination and in a plan for murdering Charles and his brother as they passed the Rye-house on the road from London to Newmarket. Both projects were betrayed, and though they were wholly distinct from one another the cruel ingenuity of the Crown lawyers blended them into one. Lord Essex saved himself from a traitor's death by suicide in the Tower. Lord Russell, convicted on a charge of sharing in the Rye-house plot, was beheaded on the 21st of July 1683, in front of his father the Earl of Bedford's house in Lincoln's Inn Fields. The same fate awaited Algernon Sydney. Monmouth fled in terror over sea, and his flight was followed by a series of prosecutions for sedition directed against his followers.

END OF VOL III.